

# HALESOWEN CHRONICLE



Thursday, November 13, 2014

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## REMEMBER

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## THE PITMEN

Milestone for a mine of information



PAGE 6

'Insult' to town is rejected by leaders

CIVIC leaders have slammed a report which branded Dudley as the worst town for shopping and fear it will damage the borough's prosperity.

The town centre was ranked bottom of a list of 500 shopping destinations across the country for shopping experience, claiming it had too many betting shops, charity stores and pawnbrokers.

Shopping areas across the Black Country faced criticism in the Vitality Index by retail consultants Harper Dennis Hobbs with Halesowen also condemned on the list at 433rd.

In Dudley the report recognised that town centre was hit by the Merry Hill shopping centre and did note some improvement but the number of empty shops was still high.

Officials hit out at the report saying it fails to recognise the £200 million regeneration of the town centre that is taking place.

Dudley's deputy council leader, Councillor Pete Lowe, said the report was an 'insult'.

"Dudley has much to be proud of and I would urge people to visit us and see all that we have to offer before making judgements from misleading statistics," he said.

### Switch on for festive lights

THE Halesowen Christmas lights will be officially switched on at an event shortly after it drops dark on Saturday afternoon.

Dudley Council have teamed up with Halesowen Chamber of Trade and Cornbow Shopping Centre to stage the event, including fun rides and musical entertainment in the town centre.

From 11am there will be fair rides in High Street and entertainment in Hagley Street, before the switch-on ceremony being held at 5pm.

# VANDALS RAID HERITAGE SITE

Accused has denied murder of pensioner

A MAN has denied murdering Halesowen pensioner Cynthia Beamond and a London man.

Leo Barnes, aged 32, who is alleged to have killed Mrs Beamond and Philip Silverstone on consecutive days in June, pleaded not guilty to two counts of murder during a hearing at Wolverhampton Crown Court.

The body of Mrs Beamond, aged 80, was found hidden inside her semi-detached house in Juliet Road, Howley Grange, on June 29 after she was reported missing by family members.

### Attack

A post-mortem examination found she died from head injuries suffered during a violent attack.

Mr Silverstone, who had been stabbed, was found dead on June 30 at his flat in Spencer House, Belsize Park, north-west London, after concerns were raised for his welfare.

Barnes, of Runcorn Road, Balsall Heath, Birmingham, is formally accused of murdering Mrs Beamond on June 27, while Mr Silverstone's murder is alleged to have taken place on June 28.

A further hearing in the case will be held on November 28. Barnes was remanded in custody.

### New base for post office

A POST office has officially opened in a new location with longer opening hours.

Halesowen Post Office has moved into MSNB Food Ltd in Peckingham Street.

Mayor of Dudley Councillor Margaret Aston opened of the new branch.

Its hours will be 8am to 6.30pm Monday to Saturday and 10am to 4pm Sunday.

Postmasters Shiv and Nav Bawa said: "We'd like to thank the local community for their continued support and use of the branch."

### Gritters get ready for the Big Freeze



True grit — Councillor Khurshid Ahmed stands in front of the mound of grit at a warehouse on Lister Road, Dudley. Huge stores of grit are piled high ready for workers to hit the streets of Dudley when the winter weather turns nasty.

Huge stores of grit are piled high ready for workers to hit the streets of Dudley when the winter weather turns nasty.

Obviously we cannot control the weather but preparations are in hand ahead of any severe weather.

We have a total of 4,000 tonnes of salt being delivered in addition to 2,500 tonnes we already have in stock.

### Bins

"Our gritting team, based at the council's Lister Road depot, will be on hand to work around the clock to keep 470 kilometres of road clear during any severe weather."

Unlike neighbouring Sandwell borough, which has provided over 500 specialised anti-snow kits to residents,

Dudley Council says it has instead placed a focus on making grit bins readily available.

"We also have a network of 1,072 grit bins across the borough, which have been filled and are ready for people to use when the freezing weather comes," said Councillor Ahmed.

The borough has 10 gritters and a team of some 60 staff ready to get to work to keep Dudley on the move. A single gritting run will use anything between 35-75 tonnes of grit.

Teams are ready for action now as forecasters predict a big drop from the milder temperatures of recent weeks.

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**TERMS & CONDITIONS APPLY**

**UKIP MEP fears threat to Black Country**

THE name Greater Birmingham may be off the table but there are fears that a combined authority for Birmingham and the Black Country will erode their identities.

UKIP West Midlands MEP Bill Etheridge says he will fight the creation of a combined authority. But his sound of the alarm has been rubbished by a council leader who spearheaded the negotiations.

The Labour-run councils say they need to be in a position to handle any devolved powers they might be offered in the wake of the Scottish independence referendum. Both Tories and Labour say they will give greater powers to regions and Chancellor George Osborne has resurrected the idea of an elected mayor in Birmingham, despite a referendum ruling it out two years ago.

Sedgley councillor Mr Etheridge raised his concerns in Brussels, saying: "Birmingham and the Black Country are just that, they are Birmingham and the Black Country not just some centralised entity. Each has their own character and the priority should be increased local accountability and democracy not more unnecessary centralisation. I will be holding a series of

public meetings on this overt EU-led threat to our local identities."

"I am extremely worried more power will be taken away from the people."

Sandwell Council leader Councillor Darren Cooper said: "No one is talking about taking away the identity of any part of the Black Country. We won't support the name Greater Birmingham either."

**Leader of council taken ill at Commons**

THE leader of Dudley Council leader has been recovering after collapsing while giving evidence during a committee hearing at the House of Commons.

Councillor David Sparks, who is also Chairman of the Local Government Association, became unwell at a session in London on Thursday.

He had attended the session of the Political and Constitutional Reform Committee session, which was hosting discussions on devolution across the UK. The session was suspended for 45 minutes after Councillor Sparks became unwell while answering a question.

A spokesperson for the Local Government Association said: "Councillor Sparks became unwell when giving evidence. It was not serious. He recovered soon afterwards. He left to go home shortly afterwards."

The organisation posted on message through its Twitter account saying: "Our Chair was briefly unwell at today's Select Committee but is now fine and heading home, thanks to those who expressed concern."

Councillor Sparks is also a ward councillor for Quarry Bank and Dudley Wood.

**Police discover cannabis farm**

POLICE officers have seized around 4,000 cannabis plants from an industrial unit in Lye.

The cannabis farm was found after a report that there had been a break-in at a lock-up premises on the Old Forge Trading Estate in Dudley Road.

The discovery was made at 8.35am by officers on Friday but no-one arrests were made at the site.

Detive Sergeant Richard Narrowmore said: "Some people may be under the illusion that cannabis is a harmless drug. The reality is quite different."

**Bowie on screen**

THE Victoria and Albert Museum's David Bowie Is exhibition is coming to cinema screens with a tour of the display dedicated to the rock icon's career. It is screened on Tuesday at Dudley Showcase at 7.30pm and Cineworld Birmingham Broad Street at 8.45pm.

**Star support is right on cue**

**Snooker greats – John Virgo and Jimmy White at Snooks Snooker Club in Halesowen**

SNOOKER legends Jimmy White and John Virgo set the green baize ablaze with their skills when they visited an Halesowen club.

The celebrities accepted an invitation to demonstrate their skill at Snooks snooker hall and local players were 'cueing up' to take them on. Around 125 fans turned up to watch local players challenge the pair.

Club owner Mike Rizzo said: "It was an absolutely fantastic evening and both players stopped to have a few drinks with people afterwards." The charity event on Saturday

is expected to raise hundreds of pounds to help fight multiple sclerosis.

The fundraiser was one of three similar events held at Snooks. Among celebrity players to have appeared at the Long Lane club are Dennis Taylor, Steve Davis, John Parrott, Tony Drago and current world champion Neil Robertson.

White became a fans' favourite in the 1980s and 90s when six-times world champion. Virgo was famous for his trick shots, comments on snooker for the BBC.

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# Police are called to cup game violence

VIOLENCE broke out at a junior football match in Stourbridge

Police were called after an official was allegedly headbutted and a car driven onto the pitch during the match between under 18s sides Stourbridge Juniors and Black Country Rangers.

Birmingham County FA ended both teams a misconduct charge. Four Rangers players have been banned for violent conduct and two face misconduct charges. One Stourbridge player is serving a three match ban for violent conduct.

FA discloses boss Mike Fellows praised the referee's actions during the game at the King Edwards ground, saying "He did a really good job in taking down as much information as he could. Both teams have apologised to him."

Touble flared at the end of the Youth Challenge Cup first round tie on October 26, which Tipton-based Rangers won 2-1.

A police spokeswoman said: "A 44-year-old man informed them he had been headbutted and an individual present fully admitted the offence. The individual has written a letter of apology and that has been accepted by all parties."

## Help to buy benefits 335

THE number of people in Dudley who have benefited from the help to buy scheme has reached 335.

The latest statistics published by England Housing Minister, Brandon Lewis, has revealed that across the UK 54,000 home owners have received assistance through the project that helps people to get on the property ladder with a smaller deposit than usual.

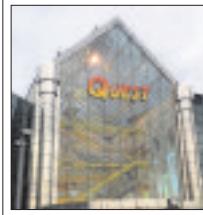
More than 1,200 people in the Black Country have bought homes using the schemes. There have been 5,547 loans in total with 337 in Wolverhampton and 304 in Sandwell.

## Branch revamp

A BANK branch will temporarily close for a refurbishment this week.

The Gornal Wood branch of the Dudley Building Society will re-open at 10am on Monday. In the meantime customers can use branches in Stone Street, Dudley and High Street, Kingswinford.

# £1.3m children's attraction to close down



The Quest zone loses money

THE QUEST entertainment zone at the Merry Hill shopping centre is to close in six months.

Paragon Entertainment broke the news after revealing the £1.3 million project lost £90,000 over the last 12 months.

It expects to lose another £110,000 over the six months before the children's attraction finally closes.

The firm revealed in September it was considering closure for the two-year-old centre which has failed to attract enough customers.

It opened in a blaze of glory in 2012 and features rope walks, soft play areas, a jungle-gym assault course and a Nerf combat arena. Thirty jobs were created when it first opened but now has just two full-time staff and a number of part-timers.

Bosses say they are to make use of a break clause in its lease with Merry Hill owners Intu, which it says is due to development work at the shopping centre at around the same time as it will close.

Paragon Entertainment chief ex-

ecutive Mark Pyrah said: "Sadly, the trading position at Merry Hill, due to the low footfall in the Quest location within the mall is simply not sustainable."

"The imminent major redevelopment at the centre, since it was taken over by Intu Properties in May this year, coincides with a break opportunity in our lease and, for commercial reasons, we have elected to exercise that break."

He added: "Quest at Merry Hill has been a valuable test bed for the company and our future rela-

tionship with Intu Properties. The board is hugely grateful for the past and continued efforts of the Quest staff and management team, and the loyalty from over 200,000 happy visitors who continue to enjoy great family entertainment at Quest."

The company, which built the Wallace and Gromit ride at Blackpool Pleasure Beach and the official Olympic Museum in Switzerland, has already slashed the value of the Quest centre by £420,000 to just £150,000. Equipment at the attraction is worth just £118,000.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Permit scheme for trailer trips to tip

HOMEOWNERS in Dudley are allowed up to 12 visits a year to the council's household waste recycling centre with a trailer or van under new rules.

The scheme applies to anyone visiting the centre in Birmingham Street with a trailer or commercial vehicle. It allows only one permit per household and per vehicle. Councillor Hilary Bills said: "This permit scheme will help us to make sure that Dudley borough residents, who pay for the site through their council tax, are the only people using it."

### Safety campaign is a bright idea

A CAMPAIGN has been launched in Dudley to boost safety during the long dark nights.

The council's road safety team is working with schools, colleges and other groups on the Be Bright and Be Seen drive, part of the national THINK! road safety campaign.

Tips include wearing brightly coloured clothing, reflective gear at night and checking that bikes have working lights. For more information visit [www.dudley.gov.uk/roadsafety](http://www.dudley.gov.uk/roadsafety)

### Enchanted display at the Glass Cone

A SPECIAL arts and crafts exhibition has been put together in the run up to the festive season.

The Enchanted exhibition at the Red House Glass Cone in Wordsley High Street will run from November 8 until January. It features interpretations of the festive season including artwork, jewellery and glass. The cone is open from 10am to 4pm and the exhibition is free.

### Homes proposed at former pub site

THE site of a former pub has gone up for sale for £260,000.

The 19th century built Earl of Wessex in Summerhill Road, Coseley, was demolished.

Plans have been approved by Dudley Council for a prospective developer to transform the land into eight houses. The site is now up for sale.

### Joe's ready to rock

BRITISH rock 'n' roll legend Joe Brown will be celebrating more than half a century making music, including a string of 1960s hits, when he performs at Dudley Town Hall on Saturday. Tickets are £25.

# Thousands are caught by the mobile speed cameras

MOBILE speed cameras have caught motorists 7,654 times in and around to the Black Country so far this year.

It is almost 2,500 more times than in the whole of 2012 according to figures released by West Midlands Police. Mobile speed cameras have been deployed more over the past 18 months since funding cuts saw fixed roadside speed cameras turned off.

The region's police and crime commissioner David Jamieson wants to get them turned back on and the old and costly wet film cameras upgraded to digital.

One of the biggest hot spots for mobile speed camera stings was on the A4040 Sandwell Road in Handsworth, close to West Bromwich Albion's stadium. The southbound stretch alone saw 1,771 fines issued this year with 440 on the northbound stretch.

### Bypass

Manor Way, the Halesowen bypass, accounted for 1,285 fines, almost 10 times as much as in 2013. Police have been catching people going at 82mph in the 40mph zone.

The A4123 Birmingham New Road saw drivers fined 213 times heading northbound towards Sandwell and Wolverhampton but just 15 southbound heading towards Birmingham.

In April 2013 the last 73 active cameras were switched off by the West Midlands Police Partnership. The rest had previously been dummy housings acting as a deterrent. The decision was made after West Midlands Police said it could no longer afford the £1m a year running costs.

She added: "Although the boy's injuries were considered serious, they are not thought to be life threatening."

"He was given pain relief, had both legs put into a splint and was immobilised before being taken to Birmingham Children's Hospital on alert."

Instead, the number of the police's mobile van cameras on the region's roads doubled to four.

## More attend Remembrance Sunday



We will remember them — standard bearers lower their flags for the two minute silence at Dudley on Sunday

RECORD numbers turned out to Remembrance Sunday services, paying their respects to the men and women who lost their lives in two world wars and other conflicts.

There were 4,000 attending Dudley's Coronation Gardens Ceremony, more than ever before as the nation marks the centenary of the start of the First World War.

Dudley North MP Ian Austin said he believed the events were so well attended as people are 'more aware than ever of the sacrifices that British

armed forces have continued to make for their country'. He added: "They want to come out and show their support and gratitude."

### Poignant

Mayor of Dudley Councillor Margaret Aston said the event was especially poignant this year as the people of Dudley thought about those from the borough who lost their lives in the First World War.

"The event also gave us chance to thank men and women who are serving at home and abroad in our Armed Forces today," she said.

In Stourbridge, a parade began at Council House in Mary Stevens Park, before marching along Queen's Drive to the cenotaph for a service of Remembrance.

A wreath-laying ceremony was held by Stourbridge Army Cadets at the crematorium as part of the centenary commemorations. It was also a record turnout in Halesowen with standing room only at the church.

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## THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



THANKS for your humorous epitaphs. The expression "never speak ill of the dead" is obviously a new one. A reader found a tombstone on which one grieving husband inscribed: "Arabella Young, who on 17th July 1781 began to hold her tongue."

ANOTHER reader tells of a headstone in Yorkshire where the first lines record the death of a husband and the next line the passing of his wife. Underneath, in a different script, someone added: "She was not a virtuous woman."

MY father, too, as a fully paid-up Yorkshireman, felt no obligation to speak well of the dead. When one of his acquaintances died the local paper approached him for a few words to include in the obituary. "You may quote me," my father replied, "as saying that Mr \*\*\*\*\* was a complete \*\*\*\* and the world is a much better place for his passing." Needless to say they didn't use it.

A POLL of Radio Times readers suggests the favourite movie line of all time is Buzz Lightyear's quote from Toy Story: "To infinity... and beyond!" The poll's top 10 inexplicably overlooked "May the Force be with you" from Star Wars and "I love the smell of napalm in the morning" from Apocalypse Now. Strange poll, strange result. But then who reads the Radio Times these days?

WE ALL have our personal best movie lines. One of mine is from the ceilidh scene in Local Hero when Mac asks for a 42-year-old whisky and is told it's not available. "Well," he replies, "Give me four eight-year-olds and a ten-year-old." And there's a gem of a line at the end of Jungle Book when the man-cub Mowgli, having grown up with animals, is suddenly enchanted by his first sight of a little girl. Baloo the bear growls: "Forget about those. They ain't nothing but trouble."

WHY did the teenager Will Cornick murder his teacher? Because he is a psychopath. How do we know he is a psychopath? Because he murdered his teacher. Yet again a mental-health diagnosis in a murder case seems to be nothing more than being wise after the event.

**Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star**

# Stray horses costing taxpayers over £90k

ALMOST £100,000 has been spent tackling the number of horses illegally grazing on a borough's parks and nature reserves.

Dudley Council used some of the £95,000 over the last financial year to pay an independent bailiff company to impound the animals.

This month the council continues to warn horse owners their animals will be taken if found on parks and nature reserves.

The most recent action took place last month when two horses were seized from council-owned land off Bryce Road, Pensnett.

The council has also revealed it has impounded more than 460 horses from roads and pathways over the past three years.

### RSPCA

Officers say they work with animal charity RSPCA.

Environment boss Councillor Hilary Bills said: "The council has developed a range of policies and services to help deal with the problem, including the introduction of the reactive service to remove horses from the highway, in partnership with the local police and a local horse removal contractor.

"Since 2011 there have been more than 460 horses taken from the public highway using this service, reducing the risk to pedestrians, motorists and horses alike, and this service is

seen as a model system nationwide.

"The council also regularly monitors the numbers of horses illegally fly grazing on council owned land and periodically takes action through a separate retained horse bailiff with specific targeted impoundment activity."

The council also posts enforcement notices at certain locations warning anyone who may leave their horses on council-owned that the horses may be impounded. Officers say they continue to check the health of animals grazing on council-owned land and work with the RSPCA and local vets when a horse requires treatment.

Councillor Bills added: "Unfortunately the number of horses left in poor condition by irresponsible owners can increase in the winter months. We adopt a robust monitoring regime."

## Mosque building gets the go-ahead

CONTROVERSIAL plans for a new mosque in Dudley have been given the go-ahead.

At a heated meeting of Dudley Council's Development Control Committee on Monday planning chiefs voted five to three in favour of the proposals, which will see the development of a 52 ft high curved roof mosque with a 62 ft minaret in Hall Street.

The development is set to include a 120 space two-storey car park, a sports centre, an enterprise and education centre and a community centre.

### Locked

Police were stationed outside the Council House from 4pm onwards as people gathered to gain access to the public gallery.

The doors were locked after the maximum allocation of 50 places was filled, leaving dozens of furious protesters outside.

During the meeting opposition was raised over the size and design of the three-storey building and lack of parking in the area. The latest designs follow a previously failed bid, which had a taller minaret at 109ft.

The plan could be halted by a High Court hearing next year on whether the land should revert to council ownership.

## Special surprise for Bomber



Tony Brown with Denis Law and the FA Cup trophy

WEST Bromwich Albion sprung a surprise on club legend Tony 'Bomber' Brown when they invited his boyhood hero Denis Law to the unveiling of his statue.

The Baggies' record goalscorer described the appearance of the Manchester United striker as the 'icing on the cake' on an emotional day for the 69-year-old Albion legend.

Supporters gathered at The East Stand at The Hawthorns for the first look of the bronze statue of Brown, who scored 279 goals for the club over a 20 year period.

Chairman Jeremy Peace spoke ahead of the unveiling, describing him as a 'phenomenal player for the club'. He said the statue had been three years in the making.

But it was the club's surprise guest, 74-year-old Law, which made Brown's day. Brown grew up in Manchester and watched Law as a teenager when the Scottish striker played for Manchester City.

Brown said: "The statue is amazing, I'm so pleased with it."

# Winter warmth

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## Four-day week is rejected by workers

A MOVE to reduce the number of days rubbish is collected across Sandwell has been scrapped after workers rejected the idea.

Union bosses have now welcomed contractor Sercos's decision to stick to the current five-day bin collection after opposing the four-day week proposal.

The company, which has run bin and recycling collections on behalf of Sandwell Council since 2011, had proposed collections from Tuesday to Friday.

It said the planned shake-up, which would have seen staff doing a 37-hour week over four days, was part of a bid for 'more efficient working'.

But Jason Holton, partnership director for Sercos said: 'We proposed a four day collection week to our employees for their consideration and feedback as it is a system we operate successfully elsewhere.'

'The workforce preferred to continue on the existing five day cycle and therefore these arrangements will be maintained.'

Matthew Law, convener for Unite at Sandwell Council, said union members voted to reject the proposal on the change to the working week at a meeting involving GMB and Unison members last week.

Mr Law is meeting company bosses today (Thursday).

# Increase in four-hour A&E waiting times at hospitals

MORE than 1,000 people waited at least four hours in accident and emergency at Russells Hall Hospital – a rise of more than 200.

But the trust in charge still beat its NHS-set target for the 13 weeks up to the end of September.

There were 1,050 patients who waited more than four hours compared with 816 people for the same period last year.

The hospital kept within the target of 95 per cent of people being treated at accident and emergency within the four hours, hitting 95.9 per cent.

The year before the hospital scored 96.6 per cent.

The figures also showed the hospital had a rise in accident and emergency admissions, up 1,562 to 25,536 over the period.

### Demand

Paula Clark, chief executive at Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust, said the hospital had not experienced the expected reduction in admissions over the summer.

She said: 'One reason was a real rise in demand. Demand from the public has increased but we have more elderly patients and also seen a steep rise in children under two attending.'

Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, which manages Sandwell General Hospital and City Hospital, had 3,345 patients waiting more than four hours, out of 39,216 admissions.

By Alex Ross

She said: 'Waiting times have a massive impact on people who are ill and just want to be seen as quickly and efficiently as possible. People are really concerned.'

She added: 'I will be writing to the hospital to ask to meet with them to see what we can do to support them in reducing times. We understand that resources are tight.'

The increase in people waiting more than four hours at accident and emergency departments at Russells Hall Hospital is mirrored at hospitals across the region.

Sandwell and West Birmingham NHS Trust, which manages Sandwell General Hospital and City Hospital, had 3,345 patients waiting more than four hours, out of 39,216 admissions.

Labour parliamentary candidate for Dudley South, Natasha Millward, will be asking health bosses for a meeting over waiting times.

## Police release CCTV of stabbing suspect



The suspect is seen at the fish and chip shop counter before the stabbing took place

A SUSPECTED knifeman was caught on camera at a fish and chip shop where the owner was stabbed five times in a daylight attack.

The victim, known locally as Mr Sidhu or Sid, had served a customer at Simply Fish and Chips, Quinton, when the man became violent. The thug shouted obscenities at the 51-year-old before smashing the shop window by kicking it.

When Mr Sidhu confronted him outside, he was stabbed repeatedly. His 16-year-old daughter found her father lying bleeding on the pavement and dialled 999. The attack happened on Friday at 3.20pm.

Mr Sidhu was rushed to Birmingham's Queen Elizabeth Hospital in a critical condition.

Detective Sergeant Leighton Shingles urged anyone who knew the suspect to get in touch.

The suspect is described as being of mixed race, wearing a grey hooded top and a black beanie hat. He ran off along Hagley Road West towards the city centre. Call 101 or anonymously on 0800 555111.

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Business bosses backing Gatwick

EXPANDING Heathrow Airport will be bad for Birmingham Airport and bad for the Black Country as a whole, business chiefs have been told.

Instead, bosses are backing a second runway at Gatwick Airport in West Sussex.

The Black Country Chamber of Commerce met strategy advisers from Gatwick and Birmingham in Willenhall to hear their arguments against a third runway at Heathrow.

It is part of an intensive lobbying campaign as an independent commission considers London's international airport options before making a final decision in June.

Birmingham Airport chief executive Paul Kehoe is backing Gatwick.

### Putters made in the Black Country

A NEW range of golf putters is being manufactured in the Black Country.

Warwickshire-based business Golf Alchemy has teamed up with Victoria Drop Forgings in Wednesfield Road, Willenhall, to produce the club that are forged in both stainless steel and silicon bronze at the factory.

Hand grinding and customising is done by craftsmen at family-run Golf Alchemy's golf centre at Studley.

Design director Tim Alimo said Golf Alchemy started at Mucklow Hill about six years ago and moved to Studley two years later.

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## IN MY VIEW



with Mark Andrews

NAPOLEON once dismissed Britain as 'a nation of shopkeepers'. Well according to a rather new depressing survey into our towns and cities, the Black Country and its environs is now a region of bookies, pawnbrokers and kebab shops.

Now, I really would like to be angry about the study by retail analysts Harper Dennis Hobbs, which ranks Dudley the worst of Britain's 500 main shopping destinations, with Halesowen, Bilston and Rugeley faring only marginally better. However, it is surely only telling us what we already know. Indeed, judging from the public reaction to the study, the main bone of contention among people in this area is how Wolverhampton, which comes in at a middling 262nd place in the survey, is not down there with them.

Outraged civic leaders say the figures fail to take into account the many regeneration schemes lined up for their areas. But aside from the proposed new Debenhams store at the Mander Centre, which will hopefully give Wolverhampton a boost, what else is in the pipeline to turn around these towns which persistently punch below their weight? Is a new market place in Dudley really going to bring back the likes of Beatties? I doubt it.

Of course, it is unfair to lay all the blame at cash-strapped councils, which in reality do not have as much power as we would like to think over where retailers choose to locate. What would be nice, though, would be for our leaders to admit there is a problem, instead of indignantly protesting at the unfairness of it all. Talking up tourism really isn't much help when it comes to the weekly shop.

The one ray of hope is the Queen's Square shopping centre in West Bromwich, which has breathed some life into the town by giving people what they want - large retail units with ample car parking, which are able to attract the big-name retailers. More please.

I'm a Black Country lad, and I will always support my local town, whatever the surveys say. But I do this out of blind loyalty, in pretty much the same way that I will always support Aston Villa, even though, more often than not, this involves paying out for an experience which leaves me feeling deflated and disheartened.

The trouble is, I suspect I am one of a dying breed, and this cannot bode well for the Black Country at all. Just as many youngsters today reject the dubious pleasures of supporting their underachieving local teams in favour of watching the expensively assembled stars of Chelsea, Manchester City or United on television, how likely is it that many of the younger generation will continue to support the likes of our ailing towns and cities, when they can just hop on a train to the bright lights of Birmingham's Bull Ring?



Present day pit guide Pete Myatt from Pedmore



Black Country miners about to go underground



In the thick of it — guide Keith Mellor from Halesowen

## WEEK IN POLITICS

with Daniel Wainwright

WHAT'S in a name? Well, plenty as it happens, particularly when it comes to the identity of the Black Country.

Greater Birmingham is dead. Long live the West Midlands Combined Authority or Birmingham and the Black Country, the councillors haven't figured that one out quite yet.

Five councils have joined forces to work on matters that affect them all and take advantage of whatever new powers or funding they might be offered by the Government.

And the reason they have done it is because the Heart of England is in danger of becoming a squeezed middle. The south east is expanding. The northern towns and cities are teaming up.

If the Black Country and Brum are to get any more than crumbs off the table they have to be pulling in the same direction. At least that's the theory behind the long-running saga of Greater Birmingham.

The problem was that every time some well-meaning person uttered it in the hope of drawing attention to the West Midlands, all it did was provoke a debate about identity.

The use of Greater Birmingham in any sort of marketing exercise did not result in national newspapers writing how the West Midlands was on the up but how its various towns were up in arms about something the London elite found to be terribly quaint. But the Black Country is the Black Country. It won't simply be quietly absorbed. We ay Brummies.

The name Greater Birmingham was supposed to be about unity and solidarity. In fact it just turned out to be terribly divisive.

The combined authority is nothing to really get hot under the collar about. No-one is suggesting a new layer of bureaucracy or generous allowances for councillors. Nor are they planning on having yet more elections that barely anyone will bother turning out to vote in.

But even since the coalition parties and Labour promised Scotland far greater control over its own affairs, there has been a lot of talk about doing the same in England.

That means whether it's the Tories, Labour or another coalition featuring one or the other after the General Election, something has to exist in the West Midlands to take advantage of anything that's on offer.

We're already playing catch up. Greater Manchester has had one for a few years.

Maybe that's why the name Greater Birmingham seemed to roll off so many tongues. As a region we need to get our swagger back and remember what a big deal we are, particularly when we're on the same side.

Birmingham is bigger than Manchester. It's the second city. It's time for the West Midlands to show London we should be priority number one.

# Museum's mine marks milestone

**The Black Country Living Museum coal mine exhibit is 25 years old. CHARLIE BENTON reports**

**ITS dark, winding tunnels have transported a generation of museum visitors back in time to the subterranean world of the Black Country's mining past.**

Now the Black Country Living Museum is celebrating 25 years since its £1 million man-made coal mine exhibit first opened to the public.

Four million visitors have been taken 'into the thick' since November 1989, up to 1,500 a day during peak times.

The Black Country was famous for the Staffordshire Thick Coal, which lay beneath much of the area in seams up to 10 metres thick and the mine exhibit was created to show miners worked the thick coal and other seams in the Black Country in about 1850.

### Maze

The mine itself is a 'drift mine', accessed by walking down a sloping tunnel.

As it comes to an end it splits into a maze of roadways and working areas, recreating the underground conditions as they would have been more than 160 years ago, with the roof coming as low as 1.5 metres in some places.

The mine, which wasn't built until 10 years after the museum itself was first opened, was the brainchild of former director of the museum Ian Walden and was funded entirely by the council and local businesses.

In total, there are over 200 metres worth of tunnels which makes the Into the Thick exhibit one of the largest, if not the largest, replica mine tours in the UK.



Original mine guides Barry Salt, Bryan Harris and Ron Butcher

After originally looking at opening up an old mine, the museum chose to use cement blocks to build a brand new, man-made mine to prevent risks to visitors and minimise flooding.

Despite being unsafe to reopen as an exhibit, the museum has a total of 42 disused mineshafts underneath it. Two of them are preserved at the Racecourse Colliery and Brook Shaft areas of the museum.

Back in the 1800s many of the mines across the Black Country not only endangered their workers, but also those

who lived in houses above them, which were slowly 'pit-pulled' down into the empty space below. The museum has an example of the phenomenon on-site in the form of a 'tilted cottage'.

"It's easy to forget the kind of working conditions miners were subjected to," said David Eveleigh, Director of Collections, Learning & Research at the museum. "The mine tour is important because it immerses our visitors into the world of the miner in a way that hearing or reading about it simply can't."

"It is one of the most popular activities on our site for good reason and it especially resonates with children, the group which would have suffered the most at the hands of lax labour laws."

Ken Bradley, chairman of the Friends of the Black Country Museum group, said: "The museum wanted to illustrate how vital mining was to the area and how dangerous that work was."

"The site that the museum is built on actually had many working mines and there were enquiries made as to whether one of them could be used but the idea was turned down by the mine safety people as there were lots of problems with it."

"The director decided that a way around this would be to do a reconstruction mine and that is how it came about."

Mr Bradley said the contractors brought in to construct the mine were also involved with the living history Jorvik Viking attraction in York.

"The contractors at the time made panels out of synthetic materials to simulate the coalface," Mr Bradley said. "But when they were laying them they came across a real coal seam."

"Although they weren't allowed to leave the seam itself open they actually took patterns and remade the panels to look exactly the same."

He added: "My father was a coal miner in a real working mine and stepping into the reconstruction for the first time all those years ago suddenly brought everything back because it is so realistic."

As part of the anniversary celebrations the original tour guides have been invited back to the museum to take a tour themselves to commemorate the milestone.

Bryan Harris, of Gornal, 78, was a mine guide for more than 20 years from the 1989 opening. The former banker decided after he retired that he wanted to do something completely different. He said: "I loved every minute of it."

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# Most people do not want this mosque

**IN response to Councillor Walther's comments regarding officers supporting the new mosque scheme.**

The question has to be asked, is he in possession of inside knowledge, as he is not a member of the Planning Committee.

I would also query the figures in opposition of the scheme, and his comments that "it would bring the Community together and transform an eyesore site".

**Fair tax? Make big boys pay**

WHY is it that when large companies and famous 'personalities' do not pay the full amount of tax that seems due from them it is always called tax avoidance?

Then when your local tradesman/friend of a friend earns a little cash on the side with some undeclared income it has become tax evasion. How, and why, does it change?

Could it be that governments, of all political colours, rely on big companies and 'personalities' for help? Or do they have high-powered legal teams and accountants to help them avoid/evasion taxes? Local trades-peoples don't have these advantages.

Here is some advice to HMRC. Get some of the 'big boys'. Make them pay. It isn't fair to the citizens of this country that preferential treatment is given to some. Remember the Prime Minister said that we are all in this together.

**M GOUGH  
Wombourne**

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With two petitions on this application, of more than fifty thousand names, it has no chance of bringing the community together.

It will in itself be an eyesore, that most of the Dudley population do not want, particularly with the call to prayer being heard all over the town — which the original planning application stated could not be allowed to happen outside the site boundary.

Yet again we the people of Dudley, who pay for our councillors expenses, are being taken for a ride, while they

are riding roughshod over our interests. I note that the Friends of Dudley Hippodrome have missed their deadline to submit their proposed plans by one day and yet the Dudley Muslim Association have missed their deadline of 31st December 2008 by more than 2,000 days and are still wasting tax payers money with the council having to fight against their proposals.

**PHIL CHERRINGTON  
Dudley**

### Concern at attack that injured dog

MY son took his dog on the lead on his regular tea time walk at Cotwell End Nature Reserve, as he reached the woods a pack of five bull greyhounds — cross between a greyhound and a bull mastiff — attacked my son's dog.

IT is with increasing consternation that I am reading more and more about the proposals for Greater Birmingham. It is just typical of unelected ill-educated bureaucrats in the European Union that they are investigating such a ridiculous idea. Drawing random lines across a map to define 'regions' is a sure fire way to cause dissent from the peoples on either side of them.

In 1916, two diplomats, one French and one British, drew a line across the Middle East to divide up the interests of France and Britain. Today the line created by Sir Paul Sykes and Francois Picot, over a bottle of whisky, is at the centre of the attempt by IS to create a caliphate based on the Ottoman Empire.

The comparison between the two is that some demographic knowledge is required before any division or amalgamation of peoples.

Although I do not envisage taking up arms against the Brummies, I can see no way that any in the Black Country will ever identify as part of Birmingham, so there will be friction for as long as this ill thought out idea persists.

I would urge all walkers at Cotwell End to avoid walking on their own.

It is as sensible as drinking whisky whilst trying to sort out the troubles of the Middle East.

**MICHAEL LAW  
Dudley**

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# Son is told to pay doctor who killed his father

A SON has been ordered to pay thousands of pounds in legal fees after he was sued by the foreign doctor who killed his father.

David Gray died from a massive drug overdose administered by Daniel Ubani on his first shift after flying to the UK from Germany to work as a locum doctor.

Although Ubani was struck off the medical register in the UK, he continues to practise in Germany.

In their campaign for justice, Mr Gray's two sons, Rory and Stuart — a GP in Cradley Heath — confronted Ubani at a medical conference in 2010 accusing him of being 'a charlatan', 'a killer' and an 'animal'.

Rory Gray, aged 49, was sued in a German court by Dr Ubani for the remarks he made at the conference.

## Intimidate

Now, a court in Lindau, Germany, has ruled that Mr Gray must pay three quarters of the legal costs, running into thousands of pounds. He must also write Dr Ubani a letter promising never to call him an 'animal' again, and has also been warned he could face a £200,000 fine if he repeats the insult.

Mr Gray said: "It is grotesque. Dr Ubani has never shown any remorse and has tried to intimidate us through the courts.

Dr Ubani was charged with death by negligence at a court in Witten and given a nine-month suspended sentence and ordered to pay 5,000 euros (£4,100) costs but has since continued to practise.

Mr Gray, a scientist who lives in Germany, said he was taking legal advice over the letter and could not comment further on the court action.

Dr Ubani has refused to return to the UK, where he has been struck off the medical register by the General



Stuart, left, and Rory Gray, at an inquest held into their father's death



Dr Daniel Ubani continues to work in Germany



Fatal dose — David Gray

Medical Council. An inquest found grandfather-of-four David Gray, 70, was unlawfully killed in 2008 after Dr Ubani, working on his first shift in the UK as an out-of-hours locum, fatally administered 10 times the normal dose of diamorphine.

Mr Gray and his brother Stuart, who works at Church View surgery in Halesowen Road, have claimed the German authorities failed to carry out an effective investigation into his death. They complained to the European Court of Human Rights but it found no violation of human rights.

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# Passengers flee as their bus bursts into flames



Lucky escape – no-one was hurt in the blaze which ripped through the bus. Pictures by Robert Cartwright

**PASSENGERS** were forced to flee a bus that burst into flames.

The blaze broke out at the back of a double deck National Express bus in Quarry Bank High Street on Thursday morning, just before 7am.

Firefighters said that about 20 per cent of the bus was engulfed in flames towards the rear of the lower deck.

Robert Cartwright was heading to work when he saw the fire. He said: "I first noticed the fire when I pulled up behind a parked lorry which couldn't get past because of it. The fire service

turned up almost immediately. It only took them about two or three minutes. It was quite surreal to see this bus with flames just pouring out of it."

National Express spokesman Jack Kelly said: "There were about eight people on the bus. The driver heard a noise, immediately stopped the vehicle and got people off. Nobody was hurt during the incident and we are working hard to establish the cause."

Firefighters from Haden Cross and Brierley Hill were called to the number 41 bus which runs through Halesowen and Cradley Heath to Merry Hill shopping centre.



Firefighters tackling the blaze

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# X-rated Cheryl is still Only Human

Reviews by Leon Burakowski

**CHERYL** has changed her surname so many times that it has apparently been dropped now that she has released her fourth album, *Only Human* (Polydor).

Never the strongest singer in Girls Aloud, her solo material has seldom lived up to her celebrity but she is getting things mostly right on *Only Human*, despite courting controversy with her liberal use of the f-word. We know she can do up-tempo dance-pop, I Don't (xxxxing) Care, the quirky Crazy Stupid Love (with guest Tinie Tempah) and frantic Firecracker (on the deluxe album) prove that. But this time she actually achieves a decent ballad, the admittedly vocodered, title track.

Blending Philadelphia smooth disco with Bacharach-like pop sophistication, **Rumer** returns with an album of new material that lives up to the promise of her million-selling debut *Seasons of the Soul. Into Colour* (Atlantic Records), featuring the 70s sounding Dangerous, is a mellow album and well-crafted to appeal to fans of The Carpenters and Carly Simon.

**Jessie J** has finally broken big in America with Bang Bang, helped by guest Nicki Minaj. It is a stand-out track on her third album **Sweet Talker** (Lava) on which stateside R&B dominates her Essex girl pop. Other highlights include retro 80s club groove Seal Me With A Kiss (featuring De La Soul) and Burnin' Up. Lyrically Jessie seems obsessed with people who don't like her music. She's in concert at Birmingham O2 Academy on January 27.

American rock veteran singer-songwriter **Jackson Browne** takes a weary look at the world and gently urges defiance to the friends of fracking and



Fourth album from singer and X Factor judge Cheryl Fernandez-Versini

firearms on his 14th album **Standing In The Breach** (Inside Recordings). He is in concert at Birmingham Symphony Hall on Monday, November 17.

**Edwin Starr** was, until his death in 2003, the UK's favourite soul man thanks to his decision to leave the US to pursue his career in Britain, basing himself near Birmingham. His 1971 funk and soul album **Involved** has been remastered and reissued on CD by BBR. It includes his best known song, War, plus covers including Sly Stone's Stand and George Harrison's My Sweet Lord. The package includes 14 bonus tracks. Or experience Motown's rawest voice on the remastered reissue 1968 debut **Soul Master** including hits Agent Double-O-Soul, Stop Her On Sight, Headline News.



After a slow start, silky smooth-voiced Rumer has returned

The bonus tracks include his Northern Soul classic Back Street. There are lots of Northern Soul compilations but if you want to dig a little deeper check out **Dancing By Myself: Lost In Northern Soul** for a plethora of vintage stompers. Raiding 60s soul vaults this 22-track CD from Cherry Red's Righteous label unearth gems such as The Five Royales' Catch That Teardrop and I Need You by the Van Dellos. But Miss orangatang by Lincoln Chase should probably have remained buried.

If 70s soul is your thang, the lush duets of Motown acts **Thelma Houston and Jerry Butler** on Soul Music Records two-for-one CD reissue, **Thelma & Jerry and Two To One** (expanded edition) in one soulful package worth seeking out. A classy partnership.



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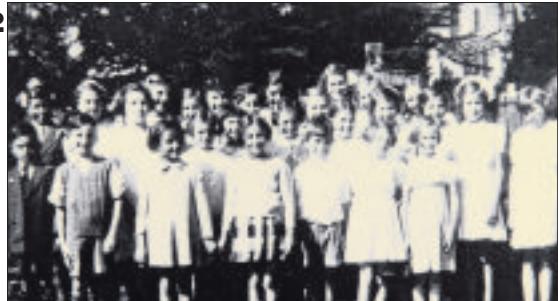


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Evacuees and local children from Newborough village school



Daphne Slade, left, with her distant aunt and uncle in Norton Canes



Ray and Reg Williams were evacuated to Colton from Westgate-on-Sea



Peter Phipps of Margate was billeted in Hednesford

# Emotive look at Children on the Move during war

**THE stories of children sent away to live with new families during the Second World War is being told in an exhibition.**

Many youngsters from across England ended up in Staffordshire as they were ushered away from the firing line. And they built up relationships with their new families that ended up lasting a lifetime.

Evocative images are on display at the Museum of Cannock Chase in Hednesford in the Children on the Move exhibition.

Among the evacuees was Daphne Slade, who was evacuated from London to Norton Canes at the age of five.

She remembers clearly the blackout in London and how the kerbs were painted so people 'wouldn't knock into each other' as they walked.

Her parents had letters about the evacuation and decided to send Daphne and her sister on 'The City of Benares', a ship travelling to Canada.

They were sent instead with a distant auntie and uncle in Norton Canes and travelled there by train by themselves. The couple were publicans and

## MEMORY LANE

By Adam Burling

Daphne learned to play the piano in their bar. When the London bombing got worse her parents moved in with them and then got a house three doors down.

Ivy Field, from Birmingham, ended up at Pipewood boarding school for girls near Rugeley. She had originally been taken to Henley-in-Arden in Warwickshire before being transferred.

At Pipewood, Ivy spent a lot of time outside with the rest of the boarders, tending to chickens and her little vegetable patch, and attending the local church on Sundays.

She can remember the monthly Sunday visits by her family, and received one or two visits from her cousin who was based at Hednesford.

Ivy said she thanks her time at Pipewood for teaching her skills she might otherwise not have had the chance to learn, like typing, filleting fish and dancing. While she was at Pipewood her house received a direct hit, so she

could never return to her original family home. All of her family had been out of the house at the time, and so they were all safe.

Another Pipewood evacuee was Ethel Ridley, who travelled there from Sparkbrook in Birmingham.

Children such as Shirley Webb had come from as far away as Kent, where she left behind her parents to stay in Colton.

Along with her brother, they were taken to the biggest house in the village which stood in its own grounds.

They were taken care of by their 18-year-old daughter who did not really know how to look after small children. Shirley and her brother ended up spending more time with the house servants. They shared their meals with the servants and the cook in particular was a lovely lady who used to take them back to her home in Rugeley.

The exhibition runs until December 19. Collections officer Yvonne Cooper said: "There is a wide range of stories about children that were evacuated.

"We have complemented it with artefacts from our own Second World War collection, which adds more to it."



Miss Evans-Rose, headmistress at Pipewood boarding camp took this shot of girls getting ready for bed

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# Glassworks transformed into 27 stylish homes

A FORMER glassworks in Brierley Hill that was famous around the world has been transformed into homes.

The Royal Brierley Hill Crystal Works, a grade II listed building, lay empty for around 15 years before a major redevelopment got under way.

Old factory floors are being restored and offices overhauled to create 27 houses and flats, all while keeping ornate period features. Former pulleys and period entrances now feature at the homes which have now gone on the market.

## Dream

Developer John Woodcock died earlier this year and did not see his dream to transform the site come to fruition but the project has continued through his family firm. Mr Woodcock bought the old Stevens and Williams Royal Brierley glassworks, based off North Street, around eight years ago.

Around 17 homes have already been purchased on the site over the past two weeks, marketed by agents Walton and Hipkiss.

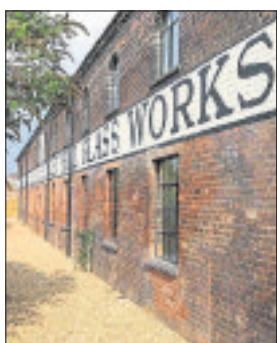
Brierley Hill Civic Society have welcomed the developed and paid tribute to the efforts of the developers.

Society member Tim Sunter said: "It is a very good development and I think people will be very impressed."

"It pays tribute to the heritage of the glassworks and it is nice that old period features like the pulleys remain inside."

Estate agent Brett Walton added: "We have already had a lot of interest in this site. This factory lay derelict for around 15 years so it is great to see what work they have done so far."

The development is due for completion next year. Production at the factory ended in the 1990s.



The Royal Brierley Hill Glassworks



A bedroom at one of the new homes



Some of the stylish living space



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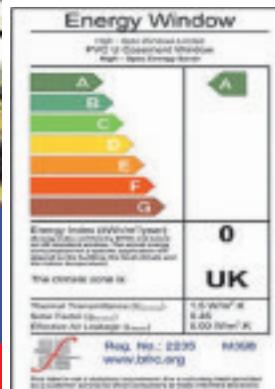
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## Fans scramble for Sachin 'selfie'



Sachin superstar — fans try to take 'selfies' with 'God of Cricket' Sachin Tendulkar, at Tesco Extra in West Bromwich. HUNDREDS of fans of cricket legend Sachin Tendulkar turned out to catch a glimpse of their sports hero and to capture the ultimate prize — a selfie with him.

The Indian cricketer, who is the greatest run scorer in the history of the game, made a guest appearance amid tight security at Tesco Extra in New Square, West Bromwich on Saturday to sign copies of his book.

There were security guards and police officers surround-

£344,000 spending by college on temps

ALMOST £350,000 was forked out on agency staff by Sandwell College over one year. Spending on temporary workers there has gone up by almost 20 per cent in four years.

New figures show the college spent £344,294 on agency workers over the last financial year — up from £278,544 in 2009/10.

The increase comes as student admissions at the college continue to rise, with almost twice as many full-time 16 to 18-year-olds this year than four years ago. Bosses say they have used agency staff to ensure there are enough teachers for classes.

A spokesman for the college said: "As is common with all colleges and businesses, where we have temporary staffing requirements we use agency staff. We always put our learners first."

He added: "Whilst this (increase in agency spend) is the case, it has to be set against the background that the number of full-time 16 to 18-year-olds almost doubled."

Most of the agency spend was in the automotive and electronic department at £118,927. Second highest was in health and social care, £43,628. In the health and safety department, the college spent £38,925.

The Hospital Consultants and British Dietetic Association are staging a week of action short of strike action between November 25 and 30.

## NHS at 'breaking point'

**GOODWILL and commitment in the NHS are at 'breaking point' according to one of the 11 unions taking strike action over pay this month.**

Nurses, midwives, cleaners, pharmacists, scientists, porters, secretaries, paramedics, occupational therapists, radiographers, dieticians, healthcare assistants, kitchen and maintenance staff will stage a four-hour stoppage in the morning on November 24.

In total 11 unions are walking out. They will then take action short of a strike until November 30.

A series of strikes have been held in recent weeks by different groups of staff. Picket lines were set up outside New Cross, Walsall Manor, Russells Hall, Sandwell General and several other local hospitals.

Ravi Subramanian, Unison West Midlands regional secretary said: "The next set of industrial action will be even stronger as more unions are joining in. Health workers care for patients and their families every day

of the year. The NHS depends on the goodwill and commitment of the workforce and this is now at breaking point.

"The Government has made no attempt to resolve this dispute and staff have been left with no alternative but to take more industrial action. Jeremy Hunt needs to realise that this dispute is not going away. All we are asking for is fair pay."

The Hospital Consultants and British Dietetic Association are staging a week of action short of strike action between November 25 and 30.

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# Moving tale of First World War courage

**Regeneration,**  
**Wolverhampton Grand Theatre**  
WITH perfect timing as we approached November 11, the stage adaptation of Pat Barker's trilogy, Regeneration, opened at Wolverhampton.

It is a traumatic tale of the horrors of the First World War where boys became men through a series of unspeakable experiences. Yet there are moments of subtle wit, bringing light relief to this moving piece. The

action takes place in psychiatric hospital where a renowned neurologist is tasked with ensuring young officers are in sufficient state to return to the trenches.

Condensing three novels into one two and a half hour play is not an easy task, but Nicholas Wright's seamless script achieved this with ease.

Stephen Boxer as Captain Rivers gave an emotional, understated performance, while Tim Delap as poet

Siegfried Sassoon offered a powerful depiction and Garmont Rhys was superbly gentle soul Wilfred Owen. The evening really belonged to the extraordinary portrayal of Billy Prior, a working class lad promoted to officer, by Jack Monaghan who perfectly depicted a soldier hiding his fear.

It was a well performed adaptation of a story from a thought-provoking period of history, lest we forget.

Alison Norton

Three get hands on with show

## REVIEWS

### Mir-fan-das out for YouTube star

Show of Hands  
Town Hall, Birmingham  
INDIVIDUALLY Steve Knightley, Phil Beer and Miranda Sykes are excellent and respected musicians but as Show of hands they put on a show which is superb.

Their faultless and versatile abilities on a wide range of instruments and their easy and friendly manner made an almost two hour show just fly by.

With both Beer and Knightley on guitars and Sykes with her trademark double bass they went straight into Be Lucky.

Bear then picked up the fiddle he plays so well for the appropriately titled Blind Fiddler.

The instrument swapping went on all night with only Sykes staying glued to her bass except for her solo.

The packed audience lapped up The Old Lich Way a haunting ballad, Go Light the Lantern, I'll Haunt You and a couple from their new Remembrance album Centenary featuring the voice of Downton Abbey's Jim Carter.

Danny Farragher

Miranda Sings, Wulfrun Hall, Wolverhampton

THE YouTube phenomenon kicked off her UK tour in front of full house of her besotted Mir-fan-das, mostly teenaged followers of her viral internet foolery.

Californian singer, comedian and actress Colleen Ballinger arrived on stage as herself, giving a fine rendition of Defying Gravity during which she transformed into her comically inept alter-ego. Swapping her sparkly dress for a pair of baggy red tracksuit bottoms, an oversized man's shirt and kicking off her heels for a pair of Crocs, the transmutation was completed with a severe centre parting and a smear of lurid red 'listik'.

She began a 70-minute audience with the word-managing, pitch-imperfect, egotist whose bizarre renditions of pop hits and show tunes, campaign against 'porn' (that is basically an

Leon Burakowski

True Faith as Paloma defied doc

Paloma Faith, Symphony Hall, Birmingham

FORTY eight hours before this gig the Hackney soul singer had been in hospital on a drip but defied doctor's advice to continue her tour.

Any fears that a below par performance would result were allayed by a blistering Trouble With My Baby and Paloma the tramp, dressed in a thigh high black dress with cameo details, took her iconic funky diva pose on top of the piano.

Each album for Paloma is a new start and it was her third and latest album A Perfect Contradiction that yielded the majority of her 90 minute set, opening with Take Me. There were no songs from her debut and only Picking Up The Pieces from her second.

A stunning version of River Deep Mountain High was performed in tribute to her inspiration Tina Turner. If Miss Faith could be this good when unwell, in a seated venue on a Monday night, next Saturday's gig at a standing room only Wolverhampton Civic should be a stormer.

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Halesowen Chronicle Thursday, November 13, 2014

# Birmingham Dogs' Home has a long and notable history in the care and protection of rescuing strays from the city streets of Birmingham and surrounding towns and villages in the West Midlands.

It was founded in 1892 on land that was made available by the late Sir Alfred Gooch Bart in New Canal Street, Birmingham, and proudly displayed the heading 'Birmingham Home for Lost and Starving Dogs' above its doors, a sign that is still present on the building, having been restored by its current owners.

Almost 100 years later - in 1987 - the Duchess of York officially opened the New Bartholomew Street home, which had been purpose-built to provide shelter and protection for over 150 abandoned dogs in comfortable kennel blocks with adjacent facilities, such as its own vets' clinic, puppy unit and isolation block.

The home is a charity which can only survive through the generosity and support of the general public and

benefactors from the local community. Without this we would be unable to carry on the vital work of rescuing and rehoming abandoned dogs.

## Rescued

We at Birmingham Dogs' Home are here primarily to ensure that the abandoned dogs coming into our care are rescued from their plight, reunited with owners who may have lost them or rehomed to families that will respect and nurture them.

Our **rehoming procedure** is designed and operated principally to be both practical and fair. It takes into consideration the high number of dogs brought into our homes on a daily and weekly basis as well as our desire to find the best possible home for each individual dog in our care.

The public are free to walk around our homes to view our dogs at any time during our opening hours of Monday to Saturday 11am - 4.45pm, but they should be aware that not all dogs are available for rehoming. Some are stray dogs due to be claimed by their owners while others are under assessment by our staff for either medical or behavioural concerns.

Once you have spent time with one of our dogs and are satisfied that you would like to offer the dog a home, our rehoming staff will take you through the various stages required to complete the process. No pressure is placed on anyone to offer a dog a home. We do stress, however, to anyone considering this option that they must take as much time necessary before deciding to reserve a dog in our care.

## Abandoned

Your help brings hope and happy tomorrows for abandoned dogs

Fundraising is the life's blood of Birmingham Dogs' Home. Without it we simply could not exist.

With no Government funding, we survive purely through the generous contributions of the general public, interested companies, groups, organisations and kind-hearted individuals who may or may not have purchased dogs from us and have remembered us in their Wills.

Legacies and other contributions are valued beyond compare and allow us to carry on providing care and protection for unwanted dogs.

This ensures that we can continue to rescue these unfortunate animals, oversee their welfare and good health and treat any conditions with first class veterinary attention all with one aim in mind ... to see them happily rehomed to loving new families.

Our highly trained kennel team do the rest with loving pastoral care prior to their four-legged charges leaving for pastures new.

There are various fundraising routes available for those who wish to donate. Whichever, we at Birmingham Dogs' Home are deeply indebted to those of you who work so tirelessly to help us help them ...

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# Shock as 'priceless' borough war painting has vanished

A PRICELESS painting depicting a Brierley Hill war hero rescuing a fallen soldier from the trenches has gone missing.

The oil painting, depicting First World War soldier Sergeant William Jordan rescuing a wounded comrade in May 1915, was painted by artist Francis Gibbons. Mr Gibbons, who lived in Wordsley, donated it as a gift to be hung in Brierley Hill council chamber in 1917.

The picture was later moved to Brierley Hill's old free library, in Moot Street, and remained there until the 1970s when it was moved to the new library in High Street.

Sgt WH Jordan, of the South Staffordshire Regiment, who lived in Campbell Street, Brockmoor, died on the opening day of the Battle of Loos on September 25, 1915.

The painting's history was re-

searched by members of Brierley Hill Civic Society who photographed the painting last July. But the painting is now missing.

Civic society Tim Sunter said: "It is very sad that the picture now seems to be lost. Given the historical context of the painting it must be viewed as being irreplaceable and therefore priceless."

Libraries boss Councillor Hilary Bills said: "It has been stored in the publicly accessible map cabinet in the library, as part of the local history collection, and we were saddened to discover that the picture appears to have been stolen.

"We would urge anyone with information about its whereabouts to let us know as we would be only too happy to display it as part of our tribute to the 100th anniversary of the First World War."



A detail from the 1917 oil painting that is feared stolen from Dudley's collection of art

# USA-style primary to choose Tory candidate

A US-style open primary will offer voters the chance to select a Tory candidate in a key marginal West Midlands seat of Dudley South.

The Conservatives are inviting people to choose from a shortlist of candidates to replace Chris Kelly, who is standing down after one term. The move copies political parties in the USA who let voters have the final say on the candidates, even if they are not party members.

It has been used in the recent Clacton by-election, which the Tories lost to UKIP, and in the upcoming Rochester and Strood by-election.

People have until November 21 to register at the website www.dudleysouth-conservatives.com/open-primary and a public meeting will take place on November 26. It is open to anyone who lives in the constituency and is aged 18 or over.

The constituency takes in Brierley Hill, Brockmoor and Pensnett, Kingswinford North and Walford Heath, Kingswinford South, Netherton, Woodside, St Andrews and Wordsley. At the last election there were more than 61,000 registered voters.

The winning candidate will try to defend the 3,856 vote majority Mr Kelly won from Labour in 2010. But he or she will face competition from both Labour and UKIP.

The Conservatives in Dudley were shocked earlier this month by the defection of two councillors — Glenis Simms and Cheryl Billingham — to Labour.

# Mexican food outlet up for business prize

BURRITO Kitchen has been refuelling weary shoppers at Merry Hill shopping centre for nearly two years.

Its range of fast Mexican food has proved a hit since 25-year-old entrepreneur Tim Stillwell, a former contestant on TV's The Apprentice, opened it after appearing on the hit BBC show.

Now the Eat Central outlet is beginning to gain wider recognition and was named one of the top 100 best up-and-coming businesses in the country.

Having recently bagged the title of best Midland's start-up in the Lloyds Bank Enterprise Awards, it has now been named in the '02 Smarta 100'. The list recognises the most resourceful, inspiring and ground-breaking small businesses in the UK. The final winner — to be announced this month — picks up a cheque for £10,000.

Tim, from Birmingham, was inspired for fresh Mexican food when spending a year abroad.

# Plant says no to £500m Led Zep tour

ROBERT Plant has reportedly turned down more than £500 million to take part in a Led Zeppelin reunion tour.

The rock legend was promised the huge sum from Richard Branson in return for 35 dates in three cities. But despite all the other members of the group signing up, Plant reportedly ripped up the contract.

The tour would have earned the singer and fellow founders Jimmy Page and John Paul Jones £190 million each before tax. But Plant, aged 66, said it wasn't the right thing to do.

A source said: "They have tried to talk him round but there is no chance. His mind is made up and that's that."

The cash was to be split between Plant, 70, and Jones, 68, while Jason Bonham, 48, son of late drummer John, would have been paid a wage to perform.

The source said: "Jimmy, John and Jason signed up immediately. It was a no-brainer for them but Robert asked for 48 hours to think about it. When he said no and ripped up the paperwork he had been given, there was an enormous sense of shock. There is no way they can go ahead without him."

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## Bruges by Eurostar

Four days various departure dates 2015



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week

**PRICE FROM** £289

There are few places left where you can totally switch off for a few days from the pressures of modern day living than Bruges. Its beauty and tranquillity is outstanding and the atmosphere of this perfectly preserved medieval town is totally unique.

Whether it's a stroll by one of the canals, sipping a coffee in the Old Market Square with the chimes ringing out from the belfry, or perhaps a gentle trip around the town by horse and carriage. Its serenity will captivate and it has something for all tastes.

A guided walk of this beautiful town will really show off its charm perfectly. Its streets are crammed with fascination and yet is so compact that the walking tour emphasises the main sites and attractions beautifully.

Climb the 366 steps of the belfry tower for breathtaking views, see the City Hall, the old Law Courts and the Basilica of the Holy Blood in which is housed some of Jesus' blood. Another must is the Notre Dame Church where Michelangelo's beautiful Madonna and Child, carved in pure white marble, is kept.

A chance to visit Ypres, centre of British activity in Belgium during the war and home to the Menin Gate, the famous memorial to the missing soldiers is offered to those that are interested. This also includes a visit to Hill 62, more commonly known as Sanctuary Wood, to see some preserved trenches.

And of course, Bruges's chocolates are known throughout the world and a visit to an establishment which still makes them by traditional methods is included to demonstrate this delicious craft.

**PRICE INCLUDES**

- Return standard class seat on Eurostar
- Return rail connection to London
- Return coach transfer overseas
- Three nights bed and breakfast accommodation
- Guided walking tour of Bruges
- Visit to Ypres and a tour of the Battlefields of WWI
- Chocolate making demonstration
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Certain entrance fees payable locally  
Organised by Riviera Travel (ABTA V4744)

## Butterflies and Orchids

Two days departing March 6

**PRICE FROM** £125

- Return coach travel
- Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation
- Visit to the Royal Botanical Kew Gardens
- Visit to RHS Wisley gardens
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

## Classical Spectacular at the Royal Albert Hall

Two days departing March 22

**PRICE FROM** £129

- Return coach travel
- Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation
- Choir ticket for the Classical Spectacular concert (upgrades offered)
- Sightseeing tour of London
- Free time in London
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

## Loire Valley and Monet's Garden by Eurostar

Six days various departures dates 2015

**PRICE FROM** £559

- Return standard class seat on Eurostar
- Return rail connection to London
- Return coach transfer overseas
- Five nights bed and breakfast accommodation
- Three dinners
- Visits to Claude Monet's house and garden; Chartres; Tours; Amboise and Leonardo da Vinci's house
- Explore the châteaux at Chinon, Chenonceau, Villandry and Fontainebleau
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Certain entrance fees payable locally  
Organised by Riviera Travel (ABTA V4744)

## Venice Classic and undiscovered

Five days various departure dates 2015

**PRICE FROM** £499

- Return flights
- Four nights bed and breakfast accommodation
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- Boat tour to Murano and glass making demonstration
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by RivieraTravel (ABTA V4744, ATOL 3430)

## Christmas in Bournemouth

Five days departing December 23

**PRICE FROM** £399

- Return coach travel
- Four nights half-board accommodation
- Traditional Christmas Lunch on Christmas Day
- Entertainment programme
- Visits to Salisbury, Poole, Swanage and Winchester
- Tour of The New Forest National Park
- Free time in Bournemouth
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

## New Year in Chester and Liverpool

Three days departing December 30

**PRICE FROM** £179

- Return coach travel
- Two nights bed and breakfast accommodation
- Three course evening meal on day one
- New Year's Eve Gala dinner and dancing
- Visits to Liverpool and Chester
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Diamond Holidays (ABTA W0552)

## New Year London Theatre

Three days departing December 30

**PRICE FROM** £249.95

- Return coach travel
- Two nights bed and breakfast accommodation at an outer London hotel
- Dinner and after dinner disco in the hotel on New Year's Eve
- Standard priced ticket for the evening performance of a choice of West End Shows on December 30 with coach transfer (ticket upgrades offered)
- Services of a coach driver/tour representative
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Omega Short Breaks (ABTA Y5914)

## André Rieu and the Johann Strauss Orchestra in London

Two days departing December 20

**PRICE FROM** £185

- Return coach travel
- Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation
- Seated ticket to see André Rieu and The Johann Strauss Orchestra at Wembley Arena (ticket upgrades offered)
- Return coach transfers between the hotel and Wembley Arena
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

## Saturday Night Theatre by rail

Two days various departure dates

**PRICE FROM** £149.95

- Return standard class rail travel to London (upgrade offered)
- Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation at a choice of four-star London hotels
- Ticket for the Saturday evening performance of a West End show of your choice
- Free time in London
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

Please note the "from" price and price bands vary for each show  
Organised by Omega Events (ABTA Y590X)

## Welsh Association of Male Voice Choirs at the Royal Albert Hall

Two days departing May 9

**PRICE FROM** £129

- Return coach travel
- Overnight bed and breakfast accommodation in an outer London hotel
- Circle seat for the concert (upgrades offered)
- Sightseeing tour of London
- Free time in London
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies

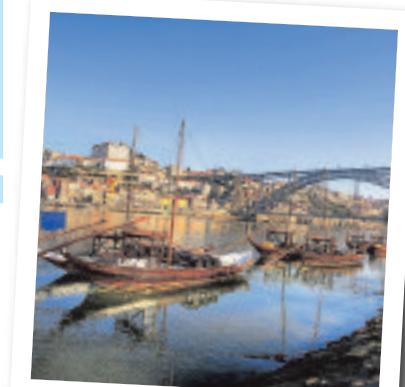
Organised by Newmarket Promotions (ABTA V787X)

## Hidden Portugal

Eight days various departure dates 2015

**PRICE FROM** £559

- Return flights
- Seven nights four-star half-board accommodation
- Full day visit to Oporto and a port wine lodge
- Guided visits to Viana do Castelo and Valenca do Minho
- Visit to Ponte de Lima
- Explore the Vinho Verde vineyards
- Journey through Peneda Gérês National Park
- Services of a tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability - supplement applies



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**Feel the noize at Slade convention**

A CONVENTION for fans of Black Country rock legends Slade is being held in Bilston next spring.

Music venue The Robin 2 and the Slade Fan Club are staging the event on April 25 to celebrate the 40th anniversary of the band's cult movie *Slade In Flame*.

The convention, which will include a showing of the film, will run from noon with an evening performance by tribute band Slyde.

Slade memorabilia will be on sale and there will also be a quiz and showing of rare videos of the band, which was led in its heyday by Noddy Holder.

All day tickets are £14 in advance and £15 on the day. Evening only is £9 in advance and £10 on the door.

**Comic is top of charity variety bill**  
BLACK Country comic Doug Parker is the headliner at a charity variety show later this month.

BBC Radio WM's Jenny Wilkes is the guest compere at the Prince of Wales Centre in Cannock for the fundraiser on Tuesday, November 25.

It starts at 7.30pm and is in aid of the Black Country branch of the MS Society, one of the Mayor of Walsall Councillor Pete Smith's nominated charities.

Vocalists Nick De Jarr and Nicole will also perform.

Tickets are £10.50 and available from the Church Street theatre's box office on 01543 578762.

# Liberty and death theme for opera season with passion

ONE of the world's most popular and passionate operas, Bizet's *Carmen*, is brought by Welsh National Opera to Birmingham Hippodrome next week.

Staged on Wednesday and Thursday, the story of a free spirit who would rather die than surrender her liberty will be conducted by James Southall.

By Leon Burakowski

former BBC Radio 3 New Generation Artist Christine Rice will sing the role of Don Jose.

It will be sung in French with surtitles in English.

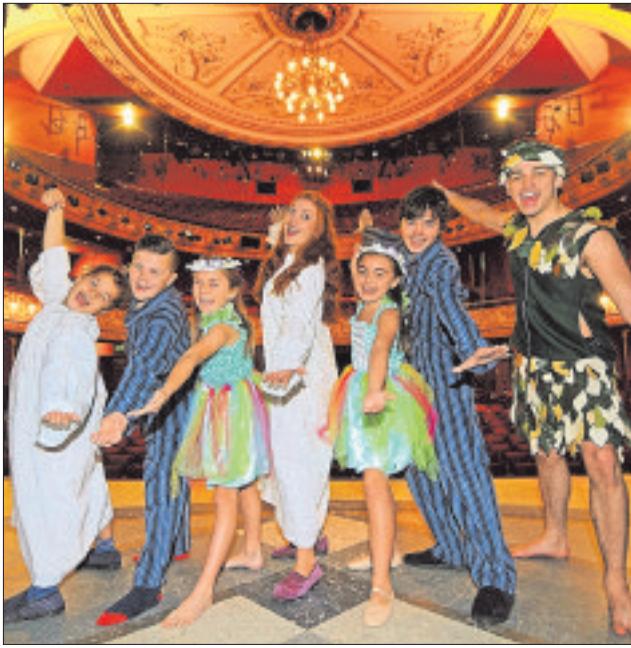
The battle cry is 'Liberty or Death' for WNO this autumn with a trio of operas exploring national and personal liberation.

## Moses

Two new productions, Rossini's William Tell and Moses in Egypt, will explore the liberty of nations, while Carmen examines what it means to be a free woman.

A grand Biblical epic composed in Naples, Moses in Egypt was one of Rossini's early operas. This new production, staged on November 21, examines the Exodus story using powerful music and costumes inspired by the vibrant colours of artist Marc Chagall.

Hungarian bass-baritone Miklós Sebestyén will sing the role of Moses with Barry Banks singing the role of Aronne. Mezzo Soprano and



Pan's people — Liam Hewitt, Ryan Harris, Maya Bowles, Abii Studwicke, Darci Dobson, Alex Clarke and Maison Kelley as the boy who could fly

## Pan ready for flight of fancy

PETER Pan is making a flying visit to Wolverhampton Grand Theatre.

Bilston Operatic Society is preparing for its musical version of JM Barrie's much-loved tale of the boy who never grew up and his adventures in Neverland, facing Captain Hook and his crew of scurvy pirates.

Young actors will be fitted for a flying harness and have been learning moves on a flying rig that will be replicated for the show next week at the Lichfield Street venue.

The cast includes Abii Studwicke and Lucy Follows as Wendy, Alex Clarke and Ryan Harris as John, Liam Hewitt and Tom Horton as Michael, and Darci Dobson and Maya Bowles as Tinkerbell. In the title role, flying across the stage will be Maisie Kelley.

Peter Pan runs from Tuesday to Saturday. Call the box office on 01902 429212 or go online to [www.grandtheatre.co.uk](http://www.grandtheatre.co.uk)

## Hugh and Hazel are joining forces

TWO stars from the New Wave era are joining forces at Bilston venue The Robin 2 later this month.

Former frontman of The Stranglers Hugh Cornwell will be bringing his band for a joint concert with singer Hazel O'Connor, kicking off their tour at the Mount Pleasant venue on Tuesday, November 25.

Each will perform their own set, Cornwell performing Stranglers classics plus music from his latest album *Totem And Taboo*. O'Connor also has a new album, *Here She Comes*, and will play hits from the movie *Breaking Glass* including the classic *Will You*. She is joined by former Belle Stars saxophonist Clare Hirst. Tickets are £20 advance or £22 on the night. Call 01902 401211.

## Singer is bringing blues back home

FORMER Black Country schoolgirl turned international blues star Joanne Shaw Taylor will be back in the West Midlands on Saturday.

Guitarist Joanne, who played her first gig as a 15-year-old at the original Robin R'n'B Club in Brierley Hill, will be performing at Birmingham Town Hall. She was voted Best British Female Vocalist at the British Blues Awards in 2010 and 2011.

Joanne, who has homes in Birmingham and Detroit, will perform songs from new album *The Dirty Truth* at the concert. Support from Bernie Marsden. Tickets are priced £17.50.

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**CHOICE****Jack Donnelly****BBC1**

**6.00 Breakfast.** **10.00 Saturday Kitchen** Live. **11.30** James Martin: Home Comforts. **12.00 BBC News:** Weather. **12.10** Football Focus. **12.50 Saturday Sportsday:** **1.00** Rugby League: Four Nations Final Highlights. **2.00** Live International Rugby Union: Wales v Fiji (Kick-off 2.30pm). **3.00** Children in Need: The Best Bits. **5.50** BBC News: Regional News: Worcester.

**6.10 Pointless Celebrities.** Alexander Armstrong invites TV stars Vanessa Feltz, Penny Smith, Kriss Akabusi, Roger Black, Keith Chegwin, Andrew Castle, Louie Spence and Carol McGiffin to compete.

**7.00 Strictly Come Dancing.** Tess Daly, Claudia Winkleman and the Strictly entourage head to Blackpool's world-famous Tower Ballroom, the spiritual home of dancing, for this week's edition. Over the years its elegant surroundings have been host to thousands of amateur and professional dancers – and tonight the tradition continues as the nine celebrity hoopers and their partners battle to get their names at the top of the leaderboard and avoid the fate of last week's eliminated couple. As they perform a series of routines, they're hoping to impress the judges Len Goodman, Bruno Tonioli, Craig Revel Horwood and Darcie Bussell, but they'll also need viewers' votes to keep them out of tomorrow's dreaded dance-off.

**8.30 Atlantis.** New series. The fantasy drama is back and much has changed in the year since the death of King Minos. His daughter Ariadne is on the throne and at war with her former stepmother Pasiphae in a bloody and brutal battle for power. As the kingdom stands on the brink of collapse, there is only one person the young queen dare turn to for help – Jason. The time has come for the warrior to fulfil his destiny. Jack Donnelly stars, with Mark Addy, Aiysha Hart, Sarah Parish, Vincent Regan, Amy Manson, Peter De Jersey, Josef Altin, Thomas Coombes, Steven Cree, Ian Drysdale and Robert Emms.

**BBC2**

**6.05 Film:** My Forbidden Past. (1951) **7.15** Rugby League: Four Nations. **10.00** The Life of Birds. **10.50** Animal Park. **(R) 11.20** Coast. **12.00** Rick Stein's Far Eastern Odyssey. **(R) 1.00** Escape to the Country. **(R) 2.00** Live tennis: ATP World Tour Finals. The opening singles semi-final at 1.02 in London. **5.00** Live International Rugby Union: Scotland v New Zealand (Kick-off 5.30pm).

**7.30 Flog It! Trade Secrets.** Paul Martin and the team give advice on collecting items that could fetch a good price or events, and Michael Baggett dips out a special set of paper money.

**8.00 Perry and Croft: Made in Britain.** The duo continue their celebration of comedy writing duo David Croft and Jimmy Perry, examining how their work can be viewed as unique chronicle of the UK in the 20th century.

**8.30 Dad's Army.** Mainwaring and the platoon are asked to provide a guard of honour for a train carrying George VI passing through Walmington-on-Sea, but another locomotive confounds their plans. (R)

**9.00 QI XL.** The Rev Richard Coles, Sarah Millican, David Mitchell and Alan Davies answer questions about jobs.

**9.45 War of Words: Soldier-Poets of the Somme.** The Battle of the Somme in 1916 is one of the most well-known battles of the First World War, remembered for its bloodshed and its limited territorial gains, and more writers and poets fought in it than in any other battle in history. Michael Sheen narrates this documentary, which details the experiences of authors including Siegfried Sassoon, Robert Graves, David Jones, Isaac Rosenberg and JRR Tolkien, looking at how their writing was informed and transformed by the conflict. The film also contains documentary accounts of surviving soldiers and battalion war diaries to recontext the literature to the events and landscape that inspired it.

**10.05 The National Lottery Live.** Gaby Roslin is joined by singer Donny Osmond as she reveals the numbers for the Lotto and Thunderball draws.

**10.15 BBC News:** Weather.

**10.35 Mrs Brown's Boys.** Brendan O'Carroll stars. (R)

**11.05 Jack Whitehall Live:** National Lottery Update.

**12.05 EastEnders.** (R) **1.35** Weather for the Week Ahead. **1.40** BBC News.

**ITV**

**6.00 CITV:** Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Pat & Stan. **(R) 6.35** Pat & Stan. **(R) 6.40** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. **(R) 6.50** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. **(R) 7.05** Cannimals. **(R) 7.10** Cannimals. **(R) 7.20** Signed Stories: Share a Story. **(R) 7.25** Sooty. **(R) 7.35** Mr Bean: The Animation Series. **(R) 7.50** Meet the Monsters. **(R) 8.15** Horrible Henry. **8.30** The Munch Box. **9.25** The Hungry Sailors. **(R) 10.25** Murder, She Wrote. **(R) 11.20** ITV News: Weather. **11.30** Storage Hoarders. **(R) 12.30** Surprise Surprise. **(R) 1.30** Faith in the Future. **(R) 2.00** Doc Martin. **(R) 3.05** Keep It in the Family. **(R) 4.05** Regional Programme: Weather. **4.15** ITV News: Weather. **4.30** Live International Football. England v Slovenia (Kick-off 5.00pm).

**7.15 The Chase: Celebrity Special.** Radio 2 DJ Jo Whalley, Bendinor barman Jake Canuso, Law & Order: UK's Georgia Taylor and comedian Marcus Brigstocke compete to win thousands of pounds for charity by taking on one of the show's resident trivia experts in a test of their general knowledge. However, they must work as a team to build their prize pot and stay one step ahead of the Chaser.

**8.15 The X Factor.** The remaining acts get into the swing of things for the return of Big Band week. Battling to win praise from the judges and viewers' votes, they'll be hoping to sound better than ever with the support of live musicians, as they take on old classics and give modern pop songs a jazz twist. Dermot O'Leary provides a friendly face on stage as Simon Cowell, Cheryl Fernandez-Versini, Mel B and Louis Walsh give their verdicts.

**9.55 The Jonathan Ross Show.** The host chats to actress Carey Mulligan, chef Gordon Ramsay, opera singer Katherine Jenkins, and comedy legend Michael Palin. Music comes courtesy of rock band Kasabian.

**10.15 ITV News:** Weather.

**10.10 International Football Highlights.** England v Slovenia. Action from the Euro 2016 Group E qualifier at Wembley Stadium, where the hosts were looking to secure a fourth successive victory.

**10.15 ITIP2.** Mark Radcliffe introduces and presents stories by Fine Young Cannibals, Rolfing, Kriss Kross, Elvis Costello, Luisa Sobral and Cyndi Lauper. (R)

**12.15 Film: Don't Tease.** (2009) **1.45** Film: Undertow. (2009) **3.20** This Is BBC Two.

**CHANNEL 4****CHANNEL 4**

**6.05 NFL:** Rush Zone. **6.30** Trans World Sport. **7.25** River Rat Race Stockton. **7.55** The Morning Line. **9.00** Weekend Kitchen. **10.00** Frasier. **(R) 10.30** Everybody Loves Raymond. **(R) 11.00** The Big Bang Theory. **11.30** The Big Bang Theory. **12.00** The Simpsons. **(R) 12.30** Marvelous Moments of Stargazing. **1.30** Channel 4 Racing: Live coverage from Cheltenham and Wetherby. **4.00** Come Dine with Me. **(R) 5.00** Come Dine with Me. **(R) 5.35** Come Dine with Me. (R)

**6.00 Come Dine with Me.** All-American mother Natascha Ingham hosts the final dinner party from Lincolnshire, hoping to impress her guests with a dish entitled "fall off your horse black bottom pie". (R)

**6.35 Channel 4 News.**

**7.05 Speed with Guy Martin.** The motorcycle racer makes a bold attempt to set a world speed record for a hovercraft, knowing that at speeds of more than 86mph, even the most experienced pilots can lose control. (R)

**8.00 Walking Through History: Nazi Occupation – Channel Islands.** Tony Robinson heads to Guernsey and Jersey to tell the story of the islands' surrender to the Nazis during the Second World War. In Guernsey, he hears of the first bombing raid that heralded the German troops' arrival and sees the spot where the first-ever British commando landed in secret, only to see the planned revenge raid fail spectacularly. A ferry then takes him to Jersey, where he finds almost all of its beaches have a bunker or a machine gun post left over from the conflict.

**9.00 It Was Alright in the 1970s.** Part one of two, Matt Lucas narrates a look back at the decade's TV shows, beginning with themes of pleasure and leisure, including outragous adult jokes in pre-watershed sitcoms.

**10.00 Film: Chronicle.** (2012) Premiere. The movie follows a disturbed superhuman abilities, but one of them is corrupted by his new power. Sci-fi thriller, starring Dane DeHaan and Michael B Jordan.

**11.40 Film: Max Payne.** (2008) Action thriller, starring Mark Wahlberg.

**1.30 Film: Shell.** (2012) **3.05** Holyrocks. **(R) 5.15** Location, Location, Location. (R)

**CHANNEL 5**

**6.00 Milkshake!** **9.15** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **9.50** Access. **9.55** Can't Pay? We'll Take It Away. **(R) 10.55** Alex Polizzi's Secret Italy. **(R) 11.55** The Christmas Heart. (2012) Drama, starring Teri Polo. **1.40** Film: Help for Christmas. (2010) Fantasy, stars Jennifer Garner. **3.20** Film: Christmas Nut. (2010) **4.00** Film: A Grandpa for Christmas. (2007) Family comedy, starring Ernest Borgnine. **6.55** **5 News Weekend.**

**7.00 Film:** Battle of Britain. (1969) In 1940, Britain faces a series of aerial attacks against Britain to gain control of the skies ahead of a planned land invasion. Under the leadership of Air Chief Marshal Hugh Dowding, the RAF mounts a determined defence over the summer and autumn, despite being heavily outnumbered and forced to match inexperienced pilots against German veterans. Second World War drama, starring Laurence Olivier, Michael Caine, Roger Shaw, Christopher Plummer, Harry Andrews, Trevor Howard and Curt Jurgens. Edited for violence and language.

**9.35**

**9.35 Film: The Wild Geese.** (1978) A corporation hoping to bring about the downfall of an African dictator hires a group of British mercenaries to free a political prisoner dangerous to the regime. However, when the company changes its mind, the geese become a deadly threat, the soldiers and the man they have saved are left surrounded by hostile military forces with no escape route. Action adventure, starring Richard Burton, Roger Moore, Richard Harris and Hardy Kruger.

**12.15** Gotham. Gordon and Bullock search for a man distributing vials of a drug that makes users super-strong, while Bruce tries to establish Wayne Enterprises' role in the Arkham project. **(R) 1.10** SuperCasino. Viewers get the chance to take part in live interactive gaming, with a mix of roulette-wheel spins and lively chat from the presenting team. **3.10** The Gad Show. Jon Bentley examines the best deals available for home TV, phone and broadband, and Jason Bradbury tests an underwater jetpack in one of the world's deepest swimming pools. **(R) 4.00** House Doctor. A doctor's house in Crayley Heath West Midlands. **(R) 4.25** Make It Big. **(R) 5.15** Angels of Jam. **(R) 5.40** Roar! The Racing Car. (R)

**DIGITAL**

**BBC Three**

**7.00** World's Craziest Fools. **7.30** International Rugby Union. **8.30** Top Gear. **9.15** Sherlock. **10.50** Jamie Guy. **1.25** Life Is Short. **5.15** The Revolution Will Be Televised. **2.25** Sweat the Small Stuff. **2.55** Snow, Sex and Suspicious Parents. **3.55** Close.

**BBC Four**

**7.00** Swarm: Nature's Incredible Invasions. **8.00** The Riviera: A History in Pictures. **9.00** Inspector Montalbano. **10.35** Kratokata Revealed. **11.25** Swarm: Nature's Incredible Invasions. **12.25** Guitar Heroes at the BBC. **1.25** Deep Purple - Made in Japan. **2.25** Sounds of the Eighties. **3.00** The Riviera: A History in Pictures. **4.00** Close.

**ITV2**

**11.15** You've Been Framed! **12.15** Film: Twister (1996). **2.30** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here Now!: Trials and Tribulations. **3.35** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here Now!: Best of the Bush. **4.35** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here Now!: Crown Jewels. **5.45** Film: Despicable Me (2010). **7.40** Film: Dungeons and Dragons (2000) **9.55** The Xtra Factor. **10.55** Celebrity Juice. **11.40** The X Factor. **1.15** The Xtra Factor. **2.10** Fake Reaction. **2.50** Teleshopping. **5.50** ITV2 Nightscreen.

**ITV3**

**1.00** Film: Columbo: Murder with Too Many Answers. **2.00** Film: 2000. **2.55** A Touch of Frost. **4.55** Agatha Christie's Marple. **7.00** Rosemary & Thyme. **8.00** Film: Doc Martin. **9.00** Midsummer Murders. **11.00** A Touch of Frost. **12.45** Born Girls. **1.30** World Kitchen. **1.55** Movies Now. **2.05** ITV3 Nightscreen. **2.30** Teleshopping.

**E4**

**11.00** Film: Melrose & Joey. **1.00** Made in Chelsea. **2.00** Film: Space Chimps. **3.45** Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer. **4.00** Melissa & Joey. **5.00** How I Met Your Mother. **6.00** The Big Bang Theory. **7.00** Film: Love & Other Drugs. **20.00** Film: 15 Years Later. **22.20** Film: The Collector. **1.30** How I Met Your Mother. **2.25** The Rocky Horror Show. **3.55** The 100. **4.40** Make It or Break It.

**Film4**

**11.00** Diary of a Wimpy Kid (2010) **1.00** Hairspray (2007) **3.25** The War of the Worlds (1953). **5.50** Dark Star (1974) **6.50** The Time Traveler's Wife (2009) **9.00** Zootopia (2016) **10.45** Attack the Block (2011) **12.30** Rare Reports: A Christmas Tale (2010) **2.10** Re-Animator (1985) **4.00** Close.

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## CHOICE



Ant and Dec

## I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here!

(ITV, 9pm)

New series. A fresh batch of famous faces wave goodbye to their lives of luxury and set up camp in the Australian wilderness for up to three weeks, battling bugs and Bush Tucker Trials, rations and rain, and heat and hunger, all in the name of entertainment. As ever, there are plenty of rumours about this year's line-up, with soon-to-be former Hollyoaks star Gemma Merna, Geordie Shore's Vicki Pattison and Katie Price's cage-fighting ex Alex Reid among those tipped to be competing for the jungle crown. Ant and Dec follow the daily drama.

## BBC1

**6.00 Breakfast.** **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Sunday Morning Live. **11.00** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **12.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.00** BBC News; Weather. **1.15** Escape to the Country. (R) **1.45** Gareth's All Star Choir. (R) **3.45** Points of Praise. **4.45** Life Story. (R) **5.45** BBC News; Regional News; Weather. **6.15** **Countryfile**. Ellie Harrison visits Acton Scott in a working farm setting. In the ways of the past, to try to help the next generation traditional skills people still practise today, including blacksmithing and making a cob oven with a group of children as they learn this skill. She also looks back through the **Countryfile** archive for other items about the crafts of the countryside, including Matt Baker learning about wheelwrighting and Helen Skelton making rakes. **7.15** **Strictly Come Dancing: The Results**. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkleman are at Blackpool Tower Ballroom to reveal which pairs are in the dance-off, with performances by Shirley Bassey and McBusted. **8.00** **Film: War Horse**. (2011) Premiere. A farmer's son forms a close bond with a horse he trains, but is forced to give the animal up when it is sold to the British army during the First World War. The horse passes through various owners on both sides as he travels across the battlefields of France, while the boy refuses to give up on being reunited. Steven Spielberg's drama based on Michael Morpurgo's book, starring Jeremy Irons and Tom Hiddleston. **10.15 BBC News**; Regional News; Weather. **10.45 Michael McIntyre's Showtime**. Stand-up comedy performed at the O2 in London during his 10-night run in 2012, featuring stories about a horrific trip to the dentist and watching his wife get undressed. (R) **11.45 The Apprentice**. The entrepreneurs devise and sell their own board games, with one team coming up with a globetrotting game for the family and the other choosing something a little more risqué. (R) **12.45 Film:** Repo Chick. (2009) **2.10** Weather for the Week Ahead. **2.15 BBC News**.

## BBC2

**6.00** Life in a Cottage Garden with Carol Klein. (R) **6.30** Great British Garden Revival. (R) **7.30** Countryfile. **8.40** Glorious Gardens from Above. (R) **9.30** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.00** Jamie Martin: Home Comforts. (R) **11.45** Jamie Martin: Home Comforts. **12.30** Rio Stein: Far Eastern Odyssey. **1.30** International Rugby Union. **2.25** Film: Up Periscope. (1959) **4.15** Glorious Gardens from Above. (R) **5.00** Fog It! **6.00** Live Tennis: ATP World Tour Finale. Coverage of the singles final of the season-ending competition from the O2 in London, where Novak Djokovic has been victorious for the last two years. Coverage continues on BBC3. **7.00** Human Universe. Professor Brian Cox examines what the future holds for humanity, heading to Florida to learn about efforts to protect Earth from potential catastrophic events. Last in the series. (R) **8.00** The Mekong River with Sue Perkins. The comedienne witnesses how deforestation and wildlife crime are stripping Cambodia of its last wild places, and spends time with the women of the tribe. **9.00** World's Greatest Food Markets. New series. Billingsgate fish merchant Roger Barton visits food markets around the globe, beginning at the New Fulton Fish Market in the Bronx, New York City. **10.00** Russell Howard's Good News. The comedian offers his perspective on stories dominating the media, whether on television, online or in print, and he is joined by a guest with an amazing tale to tell. (R) **10.30** The Wrong Mans. A case of mistaken identity couples two council employees into the middle of a deadly criminal conspiracy. Comedy thriller, with James Corden and Matthew Baynton. (R) **11.00** The Wrong Mans. Sam and Phil try to rescue Mr Stevens' wife. (R) **11.30** Film: Reunited. (1997) A poignant heart-warming film as traumatised soldiers return to duty during the First World War treat pals Siegfried Sassoon, Drama, starring Jonathan Pryce. **1.20** Sign Zone: Countryfile. (R) **2.35** Holby City. (R) **3.35** This is BBC Two.

## ITV

**6.00** CITV: Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.40** Dino Dan: Trek's Adventures. (R) **7.05** Cannimals. (R) **7.10** Cannimals. (R) **7.20** Signed Stories. **7.35** Mr Ben: The Animal Show. (R) **7.50** Ultimate Spider-Man. **8.15** Horrid Henry. **8.30** Big Time Rush. **9.00** The Aquabats! Super Show! (R) **9.25** Dickinson's Real Deal. (R) **10.25** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **11.25** ITV News; Weather. **11.35** Film: Carry On Cowboy. (1966) **1.25** All Star Family Fortunes. (R) **2.10** The Unforgettable Benny Hill. (R) **2.50** The X Factor. (R) **4.25** DownTown Abbey. (R) **6.00** You've Been Framed! Harry Hill reveals what David Cameron got up to behind the bins at Chequers, and why Lorraine Kelly is now testing Ross King's thongs. (R) **6.45** ITV News; Weather. **7.00** Keep It in the Family. Coronation Street stars Kym Marsh, Samia Ghadie, Antony Cotton, Brooke Vincent, Mikey North and Bruno Langley help contestants win big prizes. Bradley Walsh hosts. **8.00** The X Factor Results. Dermot O'Leary reveals who is safe and who has scored the lowest number of votes. **9.00** I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! New series. A fresh batch of famous faces wave goodbye to their lives of luxury and set up camp in the Australian wilderness for up to three weeks, battling bugs and Bush Tucker Trials, rations and rain, and heat and hunger, all in the name of entertainment. As ever, there are plenty of rumours about this year's line-up, with soon-to-be former Hollyoaks star Gemma Merna, Geordie Shore's Vicki Pattison and Katie Price's cage-fighting ex Alex Reid among those tipped to be competing for the jungle crown. **10.40** ITV News; Weather. **10.55** Broadchurch. Part two of two. The search for two teenagers who are preparing to move out of the psychiatric hospital into medium secure units – the first step on the road to rejoining the community. **11.55** Premiership Rugby Union. **12.50** Tui Store. **2.20** Motorsport UK. **4.15** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **4.40** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

## CHANNEL 4

**6.10** NFL: The American Football Show. **6.25** Pat & Stan. (R) **6.35** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **7.55** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Jamie's Comfort Food. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.30** The Big Bang Theory. **12.55** The Big Bang Theory. **1.20** Channel 4 Racing. (R) **2.00** Come to the Dogs. (R) **7.25** Makeover for Noddy. (R) **7.45** Paw Patrol. **7.45** Milkshake! Bop Pop (R) **7.50** Little Princess. (R) **8.05** The Adventures of Botticelli Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.20** Wanda and the Alien. **8.35** Zack and Quack. **8.50** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.05** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.20** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **9.55** Access. (R) **10.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **11.10** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.10** Film: The Good Witch's Charm. (2012) Drama sequel, starring Catherine Bell. **1.55** Film: A Star for Christmas. (2012) Festive drama, starring Briana Evigan. **3.40** Film: Farewell Mr Kringle. (2010) Christmas drama, with Christine Taylor. **5.25** Film: Dumb and Dumber. (1994) Comedy, starring Jim Carrey and Jeff Daniels. **7.30** **5 News Weekend**. **7.40** **Film: Superman II**. (1980) The Man of Steel meets his match in the form of three fugitive villains from his home planet of Krypton. Flying down to Earth, the super-powered trio unleash a reign of terror as a battle take over the world. **8.00** Film: I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **8.45** Film: Edward Joey Essex: Reen Hall. **11.45** Edward Joey Essex: Reen Hall. **12.45** Film: The Half Man. **1.30** Dads. **1.55** Film: The Vampire Diaries. **4.40** Telephones. **5.40** ITV2 Nightscreen

## CHANNEL 5

**6.00** Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **6.30** Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) **6.35** Seaside Antics. **6.40** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.55** Chloe's Closet. (R) **7.05** Only the Little White Van. (R) **7.10** Film: The Polar Express. (R) **7.25** Makeover for Noddy. (R) **7.35** Paw Patrol. **7.45** Milkshake! Bop Pop (R) **7.50** Little Princess. (R) **8.05** The Adventures of Botticelli Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.20** Wanda and the Alien. **8.35** Zack and Quack. **8.50** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.05** Jelly Jamm. (R) **9.20** Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. **9.55** Access. (R) **10.05** Police Interceptors. (R) **11.10** Police Interceptors. (R) **12.10** Film: The Good Witch's Charm. (2012) Drama sequel, starring Catherine Bell. **1.55** Film: A Star for Christmas. (2012) Festive drama, starring Briana Evigan. **3.40** Film: Farewell Mr Kringle. (2010) Christmas drama, with Christine Taylor. **5.25** Film: Dumb and Dumber. (1994) Comedy, starring Jim Carrey and Jeff Daniels. **7.30** **5 News Weekend**. **7.40** **Film: Superman II**. (1980) The Man of Steel meets his match in the form of three fugitive villains from his home planet of Krypton. Flying down to Earth, the super-powered trio unleash a reign of terror as a battle take over the world. **8.00** Film: I'm a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here! **8.45** Film: Edward Joey Essex: Reen Hall. **11.45** Edward Joey Essex: Reen Hall. **12.45** Film: The Half Man. **1.30** Dads. **1.55** Film: The Vampire Diaries. **4.40** Telephones. **5.40** ITV2 Nightscreen

## DIGITAL

**BBC Three** **7.00** Live Tennis: ATP World Tour Finals. The singles final at the O2 in London. **9.00** Snow, Sex and Suspicious Parents. **10.00** Family Guy. **10.45** Life Is Tough. **11.05** Film: Face/Off (1997) **1.25** Sweat the Small Stuff. **1.55** People Like Us. **2.55** The Revolution Will Be Televised. **3.25** Life Is Tough. **3.55** Close

**BBC Four** **7.00** The Great War. **7.40** Britain's Wild Places: The Sheep Beside the Seaside. **8.00** Congo Calling: An African Orchestra in Britain. **9.00** Rosetta: A Sky Night Special. **10.00** Pop Go the Sixties. **10.15** Mark Lawson Talks to Michael Morpurgo. **11.15** Johnny Cash: My Man. His Music. **12.15** Bob Harris: My Nashville. **1.15** Brad Paisley and Friends. **2.15** John Denver at Wembly 2002. **2.50** Congo Calling: An African Orchestra in Britain. **3.35** Close

**ITV2** **11.50** The X Factor. **1.25** The Xtra Factor. **2.30** Film: Free Willy 2: The Adventure Home (1995). **4.25** Film: King Kong (2005). **8.00** Scorpion. **9.00** The Xtra Factor. **10.00** You've Been Framed! **10.30** McBusted: The Hot Desk. **11.45** Edward Joey Essex: Reen Hall. **12.45** Film: Get Me Out of Here! **1.45** Edward Joey Essex: Reen Hall. **2.45** Film: The Half Man. **3.00** Film: Makeover for Noddy. **4.40** Telephones. **5.40** ITV2 Nightscreen

**ITV3** **11.55** Inspector Morse. **2.00** Rosemary & Thyme. **3.15** Film: George and Mildred: The Movie (1980). **4.55** Film: Columbus: Any Old Port (1979). **5.55** Inspector Morse. **9.00** Film: Lewis. **11.00** Film: William and Mary. **1.05** My life is a Celebration. **2.45** Judge Judy. **2.45** World Kitchen. **3.10** ITV3 Nightscreen. **3.40** Emmerdale

**ITV4** **11.25** World Rally Championship Highlights. **12.00** Film: Rooster Cop (1973). **2.10** Film: The War Wagon (1967). **4.15** Film: Cheyenne Autumn (1970). **4.25** Film: International Football (1964). **5.25** Film: International Football (1964). **6.00** Film: The Storm (1973). **6.55** Inspector Morse. **9.00** Film: Lewis. **11.00** Film: William and Mary. **1.05** My life is a Celebration. **2.45** Judge Judy. **2.45** World Kitchen. **3.10** ITV3 Nightscreen. **3.40** Emmerdale

**E4** **12.30** Made in Chelsea. **3.00** Film: A Turtle's Tale: Sammy's Adventures (2010). **3.15** Bubblegum Tuba Shorts. **3.30** Brooklyn Nine-Nine. **4.30** The Big Bang Theory. **5.00** Film: Avatar (2009). **6.10** The Inbetweeners. **12.15** Drifters. **12.50** Bad Robots. **2.15** Rules of Engagement. **2.25** The Cleveland Show. **3.35** Hollywood

**Film4** **11.00** The Rugrats Movie (1990). **1.00** Planet of the Apes (1968). **3.20** Titanic (1997). **7.05** Legend (1985). **9.00** Rise of the Planet of the Apes (2011). **11.05** Conan the Barbarian (1982). **1.40** House of Flying Daggers (2004). **4.00** Close

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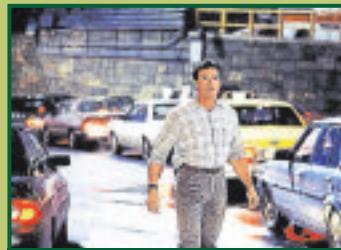
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**MONDAY****Setup, Channel 5, 10.55pm**

A criminal takes part in a profitable diamond heist, only to be betrayed by his partner in crime who makes off with the loot. The aggrieved thief swears revenge on his former friend, and seeks the aid of a powerful Mob boss in getting revenge and taking back his ill-gotten gains. Crime thriller, with Bruce Willis, Curtis "50 Cent" Jackson and Ryan Phillippe. (2011)

**TUESDAY****The Painted Veil, BBC1, 11.50pm**

An English doctor's wife in 1920s China has an affair with a politician. When her husband finds out, he plots revenge by forcing her to accompany him on a mercy mission to a remote disease-ravaged village – but the hardship of their journey gives them a new perspective on their relationship. Period drama based on W Somerset Maugham's novel, starring Edward Norton, Naomi Watts, Liev Schreiber and Toby Jones. (2006)



Daylight, Friday, ITV, 11.15pm

**WEDNESDAY****Obsessed, BBC1, 11.35pm**

An executive with a successful job and a happy family life finds his world crumbling around him when a temporary worker is assigned to his office. The new arrival becomes desperately fixated on him, going to desperate lengths to seduce him. When he rejects her, he and his wife find their lives in danger. Thriller, starring Idris Elba and Beyoncé Knowles. (2009)

**THURSDAY****Trading Christmas, Channel 5, 3.15pm**

Lonely widow Emily and frustrated writer Charles arrange to swap houses for the Christmas holidays, so she can visit her daughter and he can get some peace and quiet to work. However, both find themselves having unexpected romances when his brother and her friend make surprise visits and find the wrong person at home. Comedy, starring Faith Ford. (2011)

**FRIDAY****Daylight, ITV, 11.15pm**

A devastating explosion in the New Jersey Tunnel causes a horrific pile-up, trapping a group of motorists underground. A former emergency worker witnesses the blast and heads in to guide the handful of survivors to safety before the waters of the Hudson river above them break through and flood the tunnel. Disaster movie, starring Sylvester Stallone. (1996)

**PICK OF THE WEEK****Family matters to James as the search continues**

**J**ames Nesbitt is hands down one of the best actors on television and has been for a while now.

Everything he puts his name to oozes quality and he has a range that takes some beating.

At a time when the idea of another legal, medical or police procedural drama makes us yawn, it can't be easy picking a credible role, but simply by being in The Missing, Nesbitt has made it fantastic television.

Of course, this particular drama is helped along no end by the fact that Nesbitt is joined by such a top-drawer cast, but Frances O'Connor, who plays Emily Hughes in the hard-hitting drama, couldn't speak more highly of her co-star.

She explains: "I love acting with Jimmy because he just brings it! Every time you do a scene, he steps up and really gives it a hundred per cent for you. I love all the choices he makes; he's great. We've had to do some really tricky scenes but he's been very supportive."

O'Connor isn't exaggerating when

she talks of those tricky scenes. With such a sensitive subject matter – a little boy going missing while on holiday in France – it's little wonder the nation has taken this eight-part drama into their hearts, and O'Connor didn't need much time to think about signing up to the part.

"I just loved these scripts – I thought they were brilliant," she explains. "I was sent two and wanted to do more because they're just such great page-turners. The other great thing about the scripts is that the dialogue is so real and psychologically so true. So when you're acting, you feel it's really rock solid in terms of character and it's very easy to believe in the story."

She continues: "Because I'm a mother, I instantly related to the story. I did a bit of research about what it's like for people whose children have gone missing but really I just had to use my imagination. It's every parent's worst nightmare so I found it pretty easy to access the emotions for it."

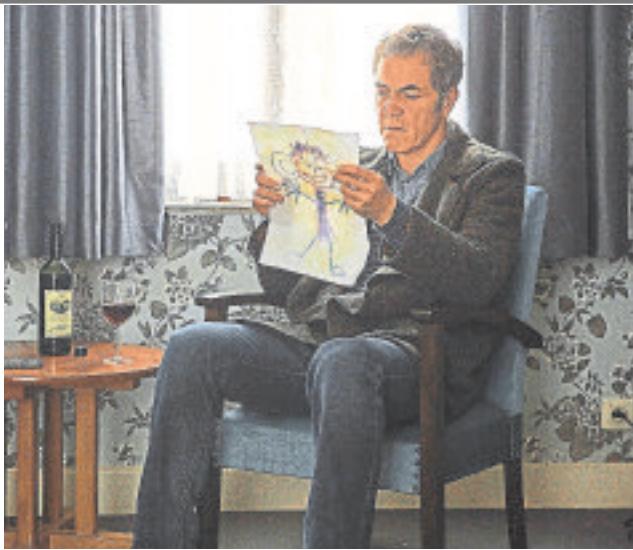
The actress seems to be drawn to complex, thought-provoking dramas

– when we last saw her in Mr Selfridge, her character Rose had announced she was dying – but she insists that the tricky subject areas are all brilliantly dealt with here thanks to the writing.

She says of The Missing: "The storytelling is really clever and really sharp which you can feel when you're playing it. There are multiple strands to the story which are very cleverly interwoven."

We reach the halfway mark tonight, and Oliver's disappearance continues to take its toll on James and Frances' characters. As we pay a visit to 2006, the case is thrown into disarray by a murder, and Tony (Nesbitt) is left horrified when someone who he thought was his friend is revealed not to be the person they claimed to be.

In the present day, Julien (Tchéky Karyo) is on a mission to reinvestigate the links between the dead witness and Oliver's disappearance, while raking over the past starts to take its toll on Emily (O'Connor) and her relationship with Mark (Jason Flemyng).



James Nesbitt heads the cast of The Missing, Tuesday, BBC1, 9pm

**BEST OF THE REST****MONDAY****24 Hours in Police Custody****Channel 4, 9pm**

It's debatable whether this eye-opening series will have inspired many people to sign up to be a police officer, but it has shown the job is rarely dull – acting sergeant Wil Taylor describes his own typical shifts as 'unrelenting carnage'. It's easy to see why as in the last in the current series, he has to deal with crimes ranging from the theft of 98g's worth of a diet soft drink to joyriding in a 45-seater bus. But the most complicated case involves three sex workers who were arrested during a raid on a brothel. The cops have to establish whether the women are victims of trafficking, or if they are the ones guilty of exploitation. Meanwhile, we also get an insight into Wil's own remarkable story, revealing that although he's gone from being a sports-mad law student to a double amputee police officer, he's always been driven by a need to see justice done.

**Intruders****BBC2, 9pm**

When the first episode of this supernatural thriller aired a few weeks ago, many viewers were unsure what was most unsettling – the general air of doom, the challenge of working out what exactly was going on, or John Simm's American accent. But now we've had a chance to adjust, we're

starting to be gripped by this tale of former LA cop Jack Whelan (Simm) and his quest to find out what really happened to his wife Amy (Mira Sorvino). This week, it looks like the detective (and the audience) may start to get some answers as Gary confesses he's a lot more clued up on Bill Anderson's murder and research than he previously admitted – and then reveals a startling connection between Amy and Rose. Meanwhile, Madison begins making sense of Marcus's memories, and Frank grows more concerned over Richard, but could soon have some even bigger worries.

**TUESDAY****Madeleine McCann: A Global Obsession****Channel 5, 7pm**

In May 2007, three-year-old Madeleine McCann went missing in the Portuguese resort of Praia da Luz. In this documentary, journalist Martin Frizell – who broke the story in the UK on GMTV – analyses the unprecedented campaign run by Kate and Gerry McCann to keep their daughter in the public eye. He traces both the positive and negative reactions that this crusade evoked and hears from the father of a seven-year-old

boy who went missing in 2003, but quickly disappeared from the national news.

**WEDNESDAY****The Apprentice****BBC1, 9pm**

After a decade on the box, there was always a danger of this glorified job interview turning into a parody of itself. And that happened in no time, with comedians jumping at the chance of lampooning Alan Sugar and the endless supply of besuited, power-dressing wannabe apprentices. Little wonder the show runners

wanted to shake things up a little this time, so the other week when Lord Sugar fired not one but three contestants, Apprentice addicts were rocked to their core. So far in series 10, we've said goodbye to Chiles, Robert, Scott, Lindsay, Nurun, Steven, Sarah, Ella Jade and Jemma among others, so who knows how many will be kicked out in the latest edition?

**THURSDAY****The Fall****BBC2, 9pm**

Jamie Dornan is a busy chap at the moment. As women around the world hold out for his much-anticipated performance as businessman Christian in Fifty Shades of Grey, we're lucky enough to be treated to his eerie portrayal of a serial killer in this Belfast-set Beeb drama in which he stars alongside Gillian Anderson. In tonight's instalment, his character Spector drives Rose Stagg away from her home in the middle of the night and warns her that he knows she went to the police. Rose going missing only serves to step up Gibson's headache a notch – she knows the pressure is now on her, as she is forced to face facts that it was her words that tipped Spector off about Rose.

**FRIDAY****Ben Fogle: New Lives in the Wild****Channel 5, 9pm**

New series. The return of the programme in which Ben Fogle meets people who have moved to inhospitable parts of the world after leaving the rat race behind. He begins by travelling to the Namibian desert to spend time with 50-year-old Gideon David, who quit his career in life insurance to live in the largest conservation area in Africa.

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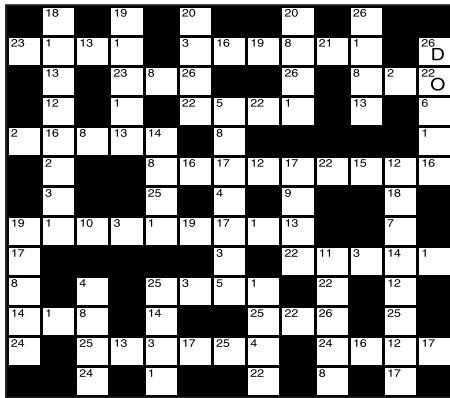
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## Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

|    |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |   |
|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1  | A | K | C | I | G | J | D | T | U | Z | S | X | V |
| 14 | N | W | H | Y | O | R | L | M | P | Q | E | F | B |

## Quiz

- To which family of birds does the bittern belong?
- In which religion is Brahma the creator god?
- Which architect laid out Covent Garden?
- What was the first major sound film?
- What do Americans call eggplant?
- Who played the sleuthing wife in the Thin Man films?
- Which ideal state is named from the Greek for 'no place'?
- Which river has Lake Tana as its source?
- Which French king was married to Marie Antoinette?
- Which organ is stimulated by the drug digitalis?

## Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

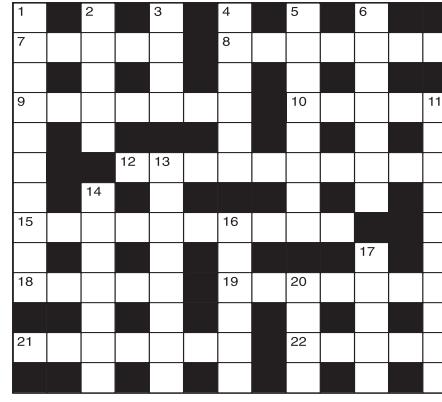
## Cryptic Clues:

## Across

- It's a chore producing pigment (5)
- Put clothes on again to put matters right (7)
- Arrived with many at King Arthur's seat (7)
- Groan about the gas (5)
- Sit to become a professor? (4,1,5)
- Is she unspeakably fair? (4,6)
- Towel thrown out for young bird (5)
- Suitor gets middle-headed about organised travel (7)
- Comply with 100 performing well (7)
- Explanation of superficial shine (5)

## Down

- Make contact, then leave: it's critical (5-3-2)
- Morify by writing bogus letter (5)
- Transaction in wood (4)
- Squirm at court order he produced (6)
- Made a loan at a higher level (8)
- He could turn out to be a genial big-head (7)
- A close shave for the illiberal spinner? (6,4)
- No one returns to the precincts to realise aspiration (8)
- A doctor catches fish at an easy pace (7)
- Note I'm being punctual (2,4)
- Turn four in the cooking vessel (5)
- Push into favour generally (4)



## Quick Clues:

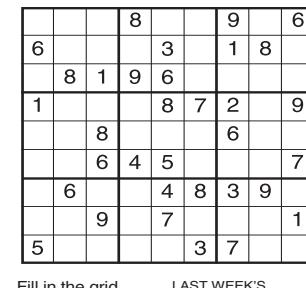
## Across

- Perhaps (5)
- Faultless (7)
- Apart (7)
- Prelude (5)
- Intentional (10)
- Send (5)
- Refined (7)
- Work (7)
- Deserve (5)
- Wrong (5)

## Down

- Envoy (10)
- Treacle (5)
- Repair (4)
- Thin (6)
- Erupt (5,3)
- Under (7)
- Wasteful (10)
- Refutation (8)
- Sleep (7)
- Rue (6)
- Deserve (5)
- Close (4)

## Sudoku



Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:  
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Safety-net; 8 Ewe; 9 Play the host; 11 Balance; 12 Avail; 13 Inured; 15 Asides; 17 Error; 18 Pontoon; 20 Emerald isle; 22 Bas; 23 These days. Down: 2 All; 3 Titan; 4 Nicies; 5 Trojans; 6 Quits and lots; 7 Deadly sin; 10 quarters; 11 Bride-to-be; 14 Earnest; 16 Optate; 19 Nudge; 21 Lure.  
QUICK - Across: 1 Boomerang; 8 Ewe; 9 Observation; 11 Extreme; 12 Poser; 13 Feild; 15 Keep on; 17 Caper; 18 Explore; 20 Annihilated; 22 Arc; 23 Stratagem. Down: 2 Orb; 3 Eerie; 4 Awaken; 5 Glimpse; 6 Lend support; 7 Deference; 10 Sets in place; 11 Effectual; 14 Errands; 16 Tether; 19 Pilot; 21 Eye.

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS:  
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Safety-net; 8 Ewe; 9 Play the host; 11 Balance; 12 Avail; 13 Inured; 15 Asides; 17 Error; 18 Pontoon; 20 Emerald isle; 22 Bas; 23 These days. Down: 2 All; 3 Titan; 4 Nicies; 5 Trojans; 6 Quits and lots; 7 Deadly sin; 10 quarters; 11 Bride-to-be; 14 Earnest; 16 Optate; 19 Nudge; 21 Lure.  
QUICK - Across: 1 Boomerang; 8 Ewe; 9 Observation; 11 Extreme; 12 Poser; 13 Feild; 15 Keep on; 17 Caper; 18 Explore; 20 Annihilated; 22 Arc; 23 Stratagem. Down: 2 Orb; 3 Eerie; 4 Awaken; 5 Glimpse; 6 Lend support; 7 Deference; 10 Sets in place; 11 Effectual; 14 Errands; 16 Tether; 19 Pilot; 21 Eye.

## Niner

Each number from 1 to 9 represents a different letter. Solve the clues and insert the letters in the appropriate squares to discover a word which uses all nine letters.

9853 gives a bird,  
4266 gives another bird,  
151773 gives a monkey.



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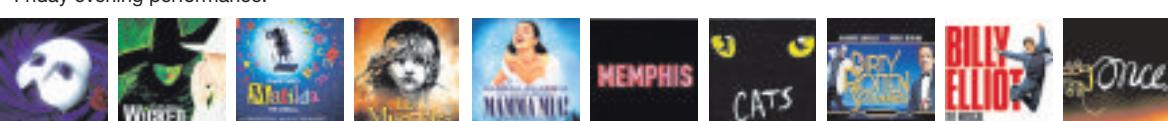
For the Dine and Dance option see the matinee performance before heading back to the hotel for dinner and a disco (conditions apply). Or the Saturday Night option includes a ticket for the show to see an evening performance.

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**HALESOWEN**, Longmoor Road £825 pcm - Fees 1ST MONTH RENT FREE! A great opportunity to rent this 3 bed mucklow style semi-detached property features: 2 reception rooms, 2 double bedrooms (master with fitted wardrobes), 1 single bedroom, modern bathroom with L-shaped bath, garage, driveway parking for multiple vehicles, gas central heating and double glazed. Ideally located for Huntingtree and Lutley Primary School. EPC: TBC.



**NEW**  
**STOURBRIDGE**, Orwell Close £800 pcm - Fees A well presented 3 bedroom semi detached home featuring kitchen/diner, lounge, 2 double bedrooms and 1 single, family bathroom with shower, garage and car port. This property is also double glazed and centrally heated (both as spec). Viewings highly recommended. EPC: D



**NEW**  
**HALESOWEN**, Newton Court £800 pcm - Fees A recently converted 3 bedroom ground floor apartment finished to an extremely high standard and centrally located with commute links to Halesowen and Birmingham. Featuring 2 double bedrooms, both with fitted wardrobes, 2 bathrooms, 1 single bedroom, 2 extra rooms downstairs, secondary glazing throughout. Allocated parking. Viewings recommended. EPC: C



**BIRMINGHAM**, Orion Building £775 pcm - Fees 1ST MONTH RENT FREE! A fantastic opportunity to rent this fully furnished apartment in the heart of Birmingham City Centre. This 1 bed modern property overlooking the Mailbox features open plan living with luxury kitchen with 24 hour concierge service, secure parking, double glazed and electric heating. Viewings highly recommended. EPC: TBC



**AMBLECOTE**, 41a/b/c High Street £775 pcm - Fees A fantastic opportunity to rent a new build home on a select development. Features of 3 generous size bedrooms (master with en-suite) finished to an exceptional standard. Featuring spacious lounge/dining areas, well appointed kitchen, downstairs WC, 3 bedrooms with family bathrooms & master bedroom with en-suite. 2 allocated parking spaces, front & rear gardens. These homes will not be available for long. EPC: D



**HALESOWEN**, The Rookery £640 pcm - Fees Set in a lovely cul-de-sac and a highly sought after location. This 2 bedroom house features a modern fitted breakfast kitchen with appliances, great size lounge, double glazing, gas central heating, house bathroom with shower, driveway parking for 2 cars and a large rear garden. EPC: D



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**HALESOWEN**, Talbot Street £575 pcm - Fees Step into this fantastic 3 bedroom terrace property. Renovated throughout without losing its character, a very high standard. Features of 3 generous size reception rooms, modern fitted kitchen, fully tiled bathroom with electric shower, gas central heating system. This property will not be available long. EPC: E



**NEW**  
**HALESOWEN**, Linnet Close £575 pcm - Fees Desirable cul-de-sac location. Situated in a very popular area of the Lodgefield Estate with easy access to Halesowen and surrounding areas. Features of 3 bedrooms, gas central heating, spacious living room, fitted breakfast kitchen with appliances, 2 bedrooms with 1 having wardrobes, modern bathroom with shower, front & rear gardens and driveway parking. EPC: E



**HALESOWEN**, Hoosen Close £575 pcm - Fees A delightful modern refurbished mid terraced house located within a desirable cul-de-sac. Featuring a bright refitted kitchen with electric oven/hob, integrated washing machine, gas central heating, large lounge with patio doors offering views across a mature herbaceous garden benefiting from a sun aspect. 2 bedrooms, bathroom with shower, front & rear gardens and driveway parking. Close to bus links to Birmingham. EPC: E



**HALESOWEN**, Haden Arch Court £575 pcm - Fees Contemporary living in Halesowen. This 1st floor spacious apartment above the archway, within walking distance to Halesowen Town Centre and buses, the apartment features gas central heating, double glazing, open plan living room, fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with separate shower cubicle, allocated parking. EPC: B



**NEW**  
**HALESOWEN**, Olive Hill Road £550 pcm - Fees This well presented 2 bed end terrace property features: 2 reception rooms, fitted kitchen with appliances, 2 double bedrooms and family bathroom, double glazing and gas central heating. Ideal for Olive Lane Primary School and also within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre. Available early December. EPC: E



**CRADLEY HEATH**, Station Road £550 pcm - Fees A newly decorated & carpeted 3 bedroom mid terraced house in this popular location minutes away from Old Hill train station. This spacious property has 2 reception rooms, downstairs walk in shower room, modern fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms & 1 single. Private rear garden. On road parking. EPC: E



**ROWLEY REGIS**, Glaslyn Avenue £540 pcm - Fees Immaculately presented modern 2 bed ground floor apartment within walking distance to Blackheath Town Centre. This property features an open plan lounge/kitchen, family bathroom, master bedroom with fitted wardrobes and ensuite, allocated parking, double glazing and electric heating. Viewings highly recommended. EPC: D



**NEW PRICE**  
**CRADLEY HEATH**, Wrights Lane £525 pcm - Fees A well presented 2 bedroom terraced property currently being refurbished and comprising of: lounge, breakfast kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, rear garden, within walking distance of Old Hill Train Station. Available now. EPC: E



**WORDSLEY**, Brook Street £525 pcm - Fees An unfurnished end terraced house, refurbished and extended comprising of: gas central heating, double glazing, lounge, fitted kitchen, 2 large bedrooms, bathroom with shower, driveway parking, rear garden. Available now. EPC: C



**HALESOWEN**, Wright Street £525 pcm - Fees Close to Halesowen Town Centre and Tenterfields Primary School. This end terraced home features gas central heating, double glazing, double doors leading through to the kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, 1 single bedroom, bathroom with shower, rear garden, on road parking. Available now. Short term let for 6 months, possibly longer. EPC: E



**CRADLEY HEATH**, Sutherland Road £525 pcm - Fees Close to Old Hill High Street this 2 bedroom semi detached family home features: fitted kitchen, 2 double bedrooms, bathroom with shower, driveway and garage parking. This property is double glazed and gas central heated. EPC: TBC



**OLD SWINFORD**, Heath Lane £495 pcm - Fees Ideally located in the centre of Oldswinford for shops, transport links and Mary Stevens Park. This large and spacious end terrace house features 3 good size bedrooms, 2 reception rooms, downstairs bathroom, fitted kitchen, enclosed rear garden and on road parking. EPC: TBC



**NEW PRICE**  
**HALESOWEN**, Stour Court £475 pcm - Fees 1ST MONTHS RENT FREE! A great opportunity to rent this spacious and well proportioned ground floor apartment in a popular location. Large & airy living room, fully fitted kitchen with appliances, 2 double bedrooms, white bathroom suite with shower. Outside there is allocated parking and communal gardens. EPC: C



**CRADLEY HEATH**, Wycherley Way £475 pcm - Fees A well presented unfurnished ground floor apartment briefly comprising: living room, 1 double bedroom with fitted wardrobes and 1 single bedroom, bathroom with shower. Benefits include gas central heating, double glazing, communal gardens, parking space. Close to local amenities. EPC: C



**CRADLEY HEATH**, Hingley Court £460 pcm - Fees 1ST MONTHS RENT FREE! Freshly redecorated and in the centre of Old Hill. This lovely ground floor apartment features an open plan lounge/kitchen with a washer/dryer and a smallridge, 2 large double bedrooms, modern bathroom with shower, 1 allocated parking space behind electric gates. Not to be missed. Available now. EPC: TBC

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- Lounge, Conservatory, Kitchen and Cloaks W/c To Ground Floor
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- Gas Central Heating and Double Glazing
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- Lounge and Kitchen/Diner To The Ground Floor
- Three Bedrooms and Bathroom W/c To The First Floor
- Property Benefits From A Gas Central Heating System and Double Glazing
- There Is A Drive To The Front and Garden To The Rear

**£170,000** QUINTON 0121 4217766



### OLDBURY

**WHEATLEY ROAD**  

- Semi Detached Property EPC Rating C
- Lounge Kitchen and Cloakroom W/c To Ground Floor
- Three Bedrooms and Bathroom W/c To First Floor
- Gas Fired Central Heating System and Double Glazing
- Imprint Drive To The Front Garden To The Rear

**£150,000** QUINTON 0121 4217766



### QUINTON

**NO CHAIN BROOKMANS AVENUE**  

- Semi Detached Property EPC Rating D
- Through Lounge/Dining Room Kitchen Utility Cloakroom W/c
- Three Bedrooms Bathroom W/c
- Block Paved Drive To The Front Garden To The Rear
- Cul-de-sac Location Property Benefits From Having No Upward Chain

**£140,000** QUINTON 0121 4217766



### OLDBURY

**GROSVENOR ROAD**  

- Semi Detached Property EPC Rating D
- Through Lounge Dining Room and Kitchen To Ground Floor
- Three Bedrooms and Bathroom W/c To First Floor
- Property Benefits From A Gas Fired Central Heating and Double Glazing
- Outside There Is A Garage A Driveway and Garden To The Rear

**£135,000** QUINTON 0121 4217766



### OLDBURY

**NO CHAIN ST KATHERINES ROAD**  

- Traditional Semi Detached Property EPC Rating D
- Through Lounge Open Plan Kitchen/Conservatory
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- Recently Refurbished Viewing Recommended No Upward Chain

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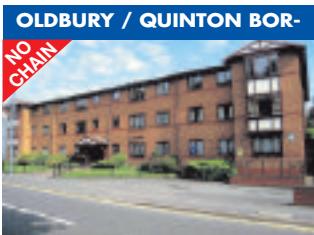


### ROWLEY REGIS

**YORK ROAD**  

- Semi Detached Property EPC Rating D
- Lounge Kitchen-Dining Room Utility Room Cloaks W/c
- Three Bedrooms Bathroom W/c
- Benefiting From A Gas Central Heating System and Double Glazing
- Garage Driveway Garden To The Rear

**£122,000** QUINTON 0121 4217766



### OLDBURY / QUINTON BORDER

**NO CHAIN GUARDIAN HOUSE, HAGLEY**  

- Second Floor Retirement Apartment EPC Rating C
- Lounge Kitchen Bedroom Shower Room
- Security Gated Communal Parking Area To The Rear
- From Security Entry Phone System And Emergency Pull Chords
- Block Benefits From Having A Lift, Laundry Room and Communal Gardens

**£54,000** QUINTON 0121 4217766



### OLDBURY/QUINTON BORDER

**NO CHAIN GUARDIAN HOUSE, HAGLEY**  

- Second Floor Retirement Apartment EPC Rating C
- Lounge Kitchen Bedroom Bathroom
- Property Is Fitted With Security Entry System and Emergency Pull Chords
- Complex Has A Lift Laundry Room Communal Gardens
- Security Gated Communal Parking Area To The Rear

**£50,000** QUINTON 0121 4217766



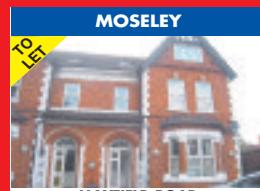
### PUBLIC NOTICE

**HURST GREEN ROAD**  
84 Hurst Green Road Halesowen B62 9QJ We are acting in the sale of the above property and have received an offer of £95,000. Any interested parties must submit any higher offers in writing to the selling agent before an exchange of contracts takes place. Your-Move 536 Hagley Road West Quinton (Oldbury) 0121 421 7766. EPC Rating D
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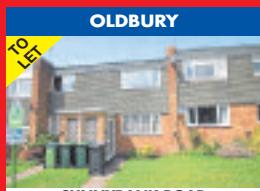


### MOSELEY

**TO LET MAYFIELD ROAD**  

- First Floor Flat EPC Rating D
- Lounge, Double Bedroom and Bathroom
- Communal Gardens Communal Parking Area
- Available From Mid October
- Viewing Recommended

**£700 pcm** QUINTON 0121 4217766



### OLDBURY

**TO LET SUNNYBANK ROAD**  

- Well Maintained First Floor Maisonette EPC Rating F
- Two Double Bedrooms and Bathroom W/c
- Communal Gardens Parking Area
- Subject To Referencing Immediate Availability

**£550 pcm** QUINTON 0121 4217766

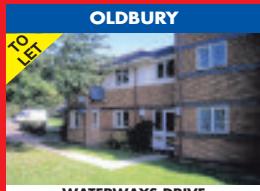


### OLDBURY

**TO LET FARLEY COURT OLDBURY ROAD**  

- Modern Ground Floor Apartment EPC Rating C
- Open Plan Lounge and Kitchen
- Double Bedroom Bathroom W/c
- Allocated Parking Area To Rear Of Block
- Viewing Recommended

**£425 pcm** QUINTON 0121 4217766



### OLDBURY

**TO LET WATERWAYS DRIVE**  

- Ground Floor Apartment EPC Rating E
- Open Plan Lounge and Kitchen
- Two Bedrooms Bathroom
- Non Allocated Parking Area
- Subject To Referencing Immediate Availability

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ARLA



# Meriva's appeal for family car buyers

By Anthony Martyn

**It used to be so difficult. You wanted a vehicle with decent economy that could do the family duties, yet had something about it when you pressed the throttle pedal. Trying to square those requirements for a reasonable budget could tie even the most knowledgeable car enthusiast in knots.**

These days things are a whole lot easier. If you want to know how easy, just go to a Vauxhall dealer and cajole them into lending you a Meriva 1.6 CDTi diesel. It's a car that's been steadily improved over the course of its lifetime, but replacing the old 1.7-litre diesel lump with a smaller but more modern, powerful and economical engine has given this particular Meriva real appeal for family buyers.

Developing a healthy 136PS, this Euro6-compliant motor serves up a super-sized 320Nm of torque at just 2,000rpm, which lends it a hugely muscular feel. In fact this Meriva will get to 62mph in just 9.9 seconds and Vauxhall has worked at improving the quality of the six-speed manual gearshift so that changes are slicker and gear engagement more reassuring. Refinement at speed is a notable strong point, with the engine only really becoming vocal at around 4,000rpm, at which point you will have probably upshifted anyway.

This facelifted second generation Meriva gets a revised grille, but the chrome accents that frame the front fog lamps aren't so obvious. The headlights now feature an 'eagle-eye' graphic. For the first time, LED daytime running lights and LED tail lights are available as an option. If you're in the mood to tick options boxes, you can also pay extra for some 18-inch alloy wheels.

The Meriva still differentiates itself from its many rivals via its rear-hinged back doors. The advantage of this design comes when entering and exiting the vehicle as the doors open to an angle of almost 90 degrees and you can step straight out unhindered. It also helps parents when they're strapping the kids in or fitting child car seats because there's no door in the way to manoeuvre around.

## Plusher

The interior itself is based around the FlexSpace seating system which allows the rear seats to fold down and slide individually. Splitting the cabin on the plusher models is the FlexRail, a pair of metal runners between the front seats that various modular storage bins and arm-rests can be clipped to and slid along. It's all very clever but those who have a thing for plastics quality might feel that some parts of the Meriva's cabin – especially rearwards from the front seats – show clear signs of cost-cutting. Still, that's the case with many of its rivals.

Whereas you used to have legions of trim level variations to wade through, with this 1.6-litre CDTi, things are more straightforward. You either pay just over £19,000

and buy the S trim or you pay just over £21,000 and bag yourself the SE specification. The S isn't badly finished with an ESP-plus electronic stability control system, twin front airbags, an electric parking brake, a CD/MP3 CD player/stereo radio with USB and AUX-in socket, electric front windows, electrically adjustable and heated door mirrors, remote central deadlock and front side airbags.

Go for the up-spec SE version and you'll find a panoramic glass sunroof, 17-inch alloy wheels, folding seatback trays and under-seat drawers, a trip computer, cruise control, curtain airbags, leather trim for the steering wheel and gear shifter and heating for both the seats and the wheel.

There are many MPV or SUV owners who have looked at the cost of petrol and diesel derivatives of the same car, done the calculations and decided that based on the amount of miles they do, they'd never justify the additional expense of the diesel variant. So they buy the petrol model and soon come to realise that the torque deficit you get with entry-level petrol engines requires you to flog them really hard to make progress. They look at their economy figures and then realise the error of their ways. They should have bought a car like this Meriva 1.6 CDTi.

Emissions are also kept well in check at just 116g/km which, like the economy figure, is even better than the lowly 1.3-litre CDTi diesel engine you can also have fitted in your Meriva.

Residual values ought to be strong as well, with many buyers being attracted to the Meriva range's best and most economical powerplant.



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Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km). Vauxhall range (excl. Ampera): Urban: 12.7 (22.3) - 76.3 (3.7), Extra-urban: 23.9 (11.8) - 91.1 (3.1), Combined: 18.0 (15.7) - 85.6 (3.3). CO<sub>2</sub> emissions: 373 - 88g/km.\*

\*Available on selected models only, at participating Retailers. Conditional Sale. Finance subject to status. Terms and Conditions apply. Applicants must be 18 or over. Finance supplied by Vauxhall Finance, PO Box 6666, Cardiff, CF15 7YT. Offer will apply to private individuals. Vauxhall Partners and small businesses 1-24 (purchase only, excluding B2B supported units). All other customers are excluded. £2,000 Vauxhall Deposit Contribution on Astra Excite. We can introduce you to a limited number of finance providers, commission may be received. #First year insurance offer available on Corsa Excite only. All drivers must have held a valid full UK licence for a minimum of 1 year. All policies are underwritten by Ageas Insurance Ltd. Other insurance specific Terms and Conditions apply. The offer will cover the full premium for drivers aged between 21-75 (motor policy only). Only available through Vauxhall Insurance. Drivers aged 18-20 will make a contribution of £99 to their premium and must agree to the fitting of a telematics box to the car; every 3 months, your policy will be reviewed and if you drive well, we will return part of this to you. The policy may be cancelled for consistently poor driving. Only available through ingenie. Offers available on orders or registrations between 8 October and 15 December 2014. #Official EU-regulated test data are provided for comparison purposes and actual performance will depend on driving style, road conditions and other non-technical factors.

# Rapide a dream machine

By Matt Joy

You don't have to be selfish to drive an Aston Martin; the beautiful Rapide S allows you to take three friends with you in four-door coupe style. For 2014 Aston has tweaked the looks and the mechanics to make this a 200mph dream machine.

As with most Aston Martins, there is much about the Rapide S that is reassuringly familiar. The DB9-based exterior is as beautiful as ever, but is distinct from that car on account of the bullish nose as well as the extra pair of doors.

Of greater significance is the adoption

of a new eight-speed automatic transmission which not only promises smoother shifts and the extra ratios but also a higher top speed; the Rapide S can now bust the 200mph barrier for the first time. The suspension has also been tweaked to improve the ride and handling and there are some new trim options too.

The Rapide S has the kind of looks to grab your attention whether you want it or not; it has curves, grace and a swagger that is hard not to love, even if you're not the fortunate person behind the wheel. The changes to the 2014 version only go as far as some new colour options—nominally Dia-Valo Red which was previously only available on the limited edition Zagato—and new ten-spoke alloy wheels.

It might seem incongruous to think of an Aston Martin as being practical, but the Rapide S is designed to carry four people and their luggage. If you're sitting in the front then getting comfortable is a cinch, with plenty of adjustment in the seats and good space.

In the rear space it is a little tighter, but unless you scale over 6ft tall the rear seats are cosy and cocooning. The boot space is useful too, with the ability to fold the rear seats and increase the space.

The things that haven't changed about the Rapide S are still brilliant, chiefly the sensational 6.0-litre V12 engine, but the new gearbox allows you to get the best from it. In automatic mode the shifts are smoother and faster, so you can ooze around town just using the mighty torque. A firmer squeeze and the Rapide S accelerates with ease, while you can switch to manual control of the gearbox to fully exploit the huge power reserves.

The Rapide S also manages to handle



**'The Rapide S has the kind of looks to grab your attention whether you want it to or not; it has curves, grace and a swagger.'**

like the sports car it is based on, despite being larger and heavier than the DB9. The steering is responsive but not too sharp, the ride controlled and the handling very reassuring for a car costing close to £150,000. It's a significant improvement on what was already excellent.

It's hard to make a case for the Rapide S being good value for money with a sticker price like that, but you certainly get a lot for your cash. Those sensational looks, the magnificent engine, the cabin swathed in fine leather and a kick-ass Bang & Olufsen

audio system. You can This is a car for the wealthy, no doubt, and although the well-heeled do tend to be fussy about what they buy it's safe to say they will be impressed by the Rapide S. A couple could use it as the ultimate GT with plenty of space for long weekends, while parents could complete the school run if they want to give their kids instant playground kudos.

This car summed up in a single word: Divine.

Aston Martin Rapide S 2014MY, £147,950.



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Official Fuel Consumption Figures for the Suzuki SX4 S-Cross range mpg (litres/100km) and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (g/km): Urban 39.7-55.3 (7.1-5.1), Extra Urban 55.3-76.3 (5.1-3.7), Combined 47.8-67.2 (5.9-4.2), CO<sub>2</sub> emissions 135-110 g/km.

The above fuel consumption figures are based on an EU test for comparative purposes only and may not reflect real driving results. \*Model shown: SX4 S-Cross 1.6 DDIS S25 ALLGRIP Manual available at £23,549. The features referred to in this advertisement and all specifications and equipment may vary depending on engine, transmission and model grade. All prices and specifications correct at time of going to print. On the road price valid from 1st October 2014 to 31st December 2014. \*\*Model shown: SX4 S-Cross 1.6 S25 Manual (metal paint) available at £430. For details contact your local participating Suzuki Dealer. Subject to availability for vehicles registered between 1st October 2014 to 31st December 2014. Offers available from participating Suzuki Dealers. Offer is open to new customers only. Offer is available on S25 models only. \*\*Offer applies to private or personal lease registrations and the first registered vehicle only. 3 routine manufacturer services covering 3 years or 37,500 miles (whichever comes sooner) by Suzuki franchised dealers or service partners only. Terms & Conditions apply, see Suzuki.co.uk/cars/freeservicing for details. Offer available on registrations of Suzuki SX4 S-Cross between 1st October 2014 and 31st December 2014, subject to availability, at Suzuki franchised dealers based in the UK, Channel Islands, Shetland and Isle of Man only. The offer cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer unless otherwise stated.

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DRIVETIME



## Helping motorists stay safe

With the clocks going back and the weather taking a turn for the wetter, local retailer, Stourbridge Motor House, is on hand to ensure drivers stay safe in dark, damp and wintry conditions.

The dealership on High Street is getting behind the Vauxhall Winter Safety Check campaign by offering Vauxhall owners a thorough safety inspection of their car ahead of the winter season.

The dealer is also reminding Vauxhall drivers of the free-to-join MasterFit Service Club, which offers considerable savings on repairs, servicing and MOTs.

Michael Casey, general manager at Stourbridge Motor House, explains: "Autumn and winter bring a wealth of

unpredictable weather conditions so it's important that cars are in a suitable condition to combat all that nature throws at them."

"Whether making a quick school run or driving further afield, there are potential hazards on every journey, so we're keen to ensure Vauxhall drivers in the area are set for safe winter travel."

### Solution

For drivers who want to get their vehicle checked and prepared for the cold winter months, the Vauxhall Winter Safety Check is the ideal solution. It costs just £25 and features a 25-point visual health check of aspects such as wiper blades, lights and tyre pressure, plus, where necessary, top-ups of vital fluids such as coolant, brake fluid, screen wash and engine oil.

Customers booking a Winter Safe-

Check will drive away not only with peace of mind, but also a free Winter Survival pack worth £20.

The pack, which comes in a Vauxhall branded bag, contains Autoglym De-Icer, a wind-up torch, a foldable shovel, a high visibility jacket and ice scraper.

In addition to the Winter Safety Check, Stourbridge Motor House is also reminding drivers who own a Vauxhall vehicle aged over two years that they could save up to 25 per cent off servicing and repairs and get half price MOTs when they join the free Vauxhall MasterFit Service Club.

Michael Casey concludes: "The Vauxhall MasterFit Service Club is a great way for owners to take care of their car for less and be assured that their Vauxhall is in the best possible hands with the people who know it best."



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| 05/55 Mini One 1.6 (Chilli) Convertible 50k, Orange, Alloys, Air Con, Half Leather £5495 / £31 Per Week          | 08/08 Ford Fiesta 1.25 Style Climate, 42k, Red, Alloys, Climate Pack £3995 / £22 Per Week                       |
| 08/08 Saab 9-3 Vector Sport DTH Diesel Automatic Estate 80k, Grey, Two Tone Leather, Alloys £5995 / £35 Per Week | 07/07 Ford Fiesta 1.4 TD Diesel ONLY 37k MILES, Apple Green, Alloys, CD £3995 / £22 Per Week                    |
| 03/03 Audi TT Roadster 1.8T Convertible ONLY 58169 MILES, Black, Alloy Wheels, Air Con £5495 / £33 Per Week      | 07/07 Suzuki Swift 1.3 GL one owner 47k, Burnt Orange, CD Player, E/windows £3995 / £22 Per Week                |
| 09/59 Kia Rio 3 1.5 CRDi Diesel 62k, *ONLY 30 ROAD TAX*, Silver, Alloys, Park Sensors £4995 / £29 Per Week       | 05/55 Vauxhall Astra Club 1.6 Twinport Semi-Automatic Blue, 50k, Alloys, Air Con £3295 / £22 Per Week           |

Finance example: Kia Rio 3 1.5 CRDi Diesel, Cash Price 4995, Deposit 300, Amount of credit 4695, Fixed interest rate 6.25% Flat rate, 12% APR, 48 Payments of 122.28 (30.50 per week) Total amount payable 6169.44 (Excludes 150 Document fee and 150 Completion fee, Subject to status)

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**CHORAL SPECTACULAR**

**WARLEY MALE CHOIR**

PRESENTS...

**MEN IN CONCERT**

with guest choir  
**HADLEY & DISTRICT MVC (TELFORD)**  
and special Guests

The Brilliant 2 Man Brass Band BRASSED UP at Corn Bow Hall, Halesowen, B63 3AF SATURDAY 22nd NOVEMBER at 7pm

TICKETS: £8 available on the door or contact: Ron Sweetland - Tel: 0121 552 4113

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**STEEL FRAMED** bed estates, 3 seater, brown, 75 inches w., never used. £250. 01902 835951.

**TRADITIONAL ROLL ARM TWO SEATER SETTEE**

Antique gold / black, on legs with solid brass castors. Newly re-upholstered. £295.

**CREAM GUSTAVIAN CORNER UNIT**

Top half glazed, very ornate. Beautiful piece of furniture. Cost £700. Sell £250. 01299 400516.

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**BEKO** od1300b Fan assisted built in, double oven black glass front, no timer, 2 years old. £190. 02350no. 01384 303292.

**DOUBLE GAS OVEN** Cannon glass lid, freestanding, grill and four burners, brushed silver, excellent condition. £220. 01902 835951.

**RAISER RECLINER ARMCHAIRS**, two, electrically operated, matching two seater settee, excellent condition. £500. 07932 772007.

**STANNAH STAIRLIFT** 420SL, 4 metres track, standard step height, swivel seat, excellent condition, collection. £525. 07535 747217.

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**DOUBLE GLAZED** Patio windows, 6x6 and 5x5, £150. 01902 755180

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at Corn Bow Hall, Halesowen, B63 3AF

SATURDAY 22nd NOVEMBER

at 7pm

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2010. 31,200 miles. black, abs, air bag, alarm, long MoT, central locking, stereo, CD, professionally fitted towbar, used once only. £3,100 ono.  
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**FORD FIESTA** 2010. 1600 diesel sports, full leather, traction control, parking sensors, 12 months MoT, 10,000 miles. £1,995.

**FORD FIESTA LX** 2004. 3dr, 87,000 miles, MoT, air bags, E/W, AC, one previous owner, £1,500.

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# Classified Ads

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Choose your show, price band\* and how you want to travel



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\*The "from" price and price bands vary for each show – see brochure for details.  
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**PEUGEOT 307CC COUPE**  
Rare opportunity, hard top convertible, 4,700 miles only, 2005, like new, £4,995 ono. 01922 727446.

**PORSCHE 911 CARRERA**  
2001, 996, 3.6, 2dr, 200bhp, 91,000 miles, MoT, pas, alc, fab, alarm, MoT, pas, power amp, superb, £4,999 ono. 01902 405262.

**RENAULT CLIO**  
2012, 24,500 miles, smoky blue, 4 door, a/c, c/c, leather seats, Sat, 1.1c, cheap to run. £5,100 ono. 07532 115881.

**SAAB 95 TD SE 1.9**  
Diesel 08, 40,000 miles, 1.9TD, FSH, immaculate, MoT April, £4,750 ono. 01902 597423 / 07814 295791.

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**VOLKSWAGEN GOLF 2.0 BLUE MOTION 140**

2011, 79,000 miles, abs, fsh, full MoT, diesel, optical park, DAB, phone, Cruise, 140bhp. £9,800. 07873 257350.

**VOLKSWAGEN POLO 1.2S**  
2011, 25,000 miles, Sat, abs, white, electric window, pas, airbag, VW fsh, one owner, £7,500. 07873 427350.

**VW GOLF GT, FS 2.0 16V 140**  
MoT, 2009, 61,000 miles, 5dr, 150bhp, blue, service history, £1,950 ono. 01902 847277, 07548 511612.

**WW POLO 1.2, 2011, 61 plate, 11 months MoT, good condition, 59,500 miles, reliable, £5,000 ono. 01902 745771 / 07791 076789.**

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**CHRYSLER PT CRUISER**, 2.0, petrol, auto, 48k, SH, looks & drives as new, £999 ono. 0121 574066.

**TIATRO XANA VTR**, 51 reg, full MoT, 85k, alloys, SR, CL, PAs, silver/black, MoT, £500. 07804 168151.

**TIATRO XANTIA Diesel**, HDi, X reg, 88k, tow bar, excellent condition, long MoT, £695 ono. 0117 7805 090075.

**DAIHATSU TERIOS**  
2003, 122,000 miles, blue, abs, electric windows, air bag, electric mirrors, MoT, central locking, alloys, stereo, CD, 4x4. £1,500 ono. 07805 599836.

**DAIHATSU TERIOS S** reg, used daily, MoT expired, new car forces 1000 ono. 01902 830716.

**FORD ESCORT TD**, 8 months MoT, 10 miles, good condition, £350 ono. 07961 557762.

**FORD KA** 52, 74,779 miles, MoT Jan 2012, 1.3, 16v, 5dr, £900 ono. 01902 590989 / 07456 426674.

**FORD MAVERICK 4x4**, 1.7WD, 2.7TD, M Reg, 4 months MoT, tow bar, bulb bar, £495, o.n.o. 01902 842401 or 07949 259204.

**LANDROVER DISCOVERY** 1994, MoT, 100k, 4x4, 7 seats, steps, new clutch, CD player, £975 ono. 01384 626755 / 07936 282473.

**MERCEDES CLK320** Avantgarde, 2002, 132,000 miles, green, auto, fsh, MoT, drives perfectly, £1,250. 07973 633262.

**PEUGEOT 106 1.1L XL INDEPENDENCE** 1997, P Reg, Blue 111k, MoT Sept 15, Ideal First Car £475. 01902 655895, 07785 130200.

**PEUGEOT 206 STATION WAGON SXI**  
52 plate, 59,000 miles, 12 months, MoT, new clutch and tyres, excellent condition. £7,295 ono. 07772 337190.

**RENAULT LAGUNA** silver, 55 reg, diesel, d/hatch, 104k, full FSH, 1.9dci, 2007, 54,005 miles, 01384 274518.

**ROVER 25** Facelift, 1.4, black, 54 plate, 68k miles, MoT July 2015, CL, some service history, £775 ono. Dudley/Won 07749 631953.

**VAUXHALL CORSA** 1.2i, 3dr hatch, 2005, MoT, blue, 100k, 129k, 4 former keepers, excellent runner, £750 ono. 07974 264128.

**VAUXHALL CORSA** 1.2, 5-dr, silver, 03 reg, 54,000 miles, 5 months MoT, very good condition, £1,075. 07850 113660.

**VAUXHALL CORSA COMFORT**  
2001, 69,800 miles, green, fsh, long MoT, metallic paint, central locking, sunroof, stereo, £1,200 ono. 07722 566428.

**WOLKSWAGEN GOLF**, 1998, 97k, auto, Red, abs, el/w, elm, abs, cd, CD, new cambelt, 84k, 1 months MoT, £450 ono. 07813 612943.

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## Contest is tough for swim members

SENIOR swimmers from Halesowen Swimming Club travelled to Nuneaton on at the weekend for the second round of the West Midlands National League.

In the premier league competition City of Derby and City of Coventry dominated the gala with only the minor placing up for grabs.

Halesowen were involved in a tight battle all evening and at the half-way mark were just holding fourth spot.

Despite some battling performances and a thrilling final men's relay Halesowen had to settle for fifth spot on the night.

Individual wins were hard to come by with double event winner James Cuthert in the breaststroke and butterfly and other individual event winners Lily Merrell breaststroke; Josh Bradley and Mark Laing butterfly and Chloe Finch in the freestyle.

Richard Spooner was involved in the two stand out races against 50m breaststroke world record holder Adam Peaty and was agonisingly close in the individual medley. Final scores were Derby A 231, Coventry 188, City of Hereford 179, Stratford Sharks 160, Halesowen 152, Bilston 140.

## Baggies game is changed

ALBION'S trip to Everton has been moved to Monday, January 19, so the match can be covered live by Sky Sports.

The Baggies away game, was scheduled for January 17, will now take place two days later kicking off at 8pm.

Villa's trip to Arsenal has also been moved back a day to Sunday, February 1 (1.30pm) as part of the latest batch of games which have been selected for live television coverage.

Current Premier League leaders' Chelsea's home game against fellow big-spenders Manchester City is another match which has been moved by Sky to 5.30pm on Saturday, January 31.

# Forwards show determination for win

### Bromsgrove 7 Old Halesoniens 1sts 24

A rare break from League action at the weekend saw Hales travel to locals Bromsgrove for a North Midlands Cup quarter final.

Early driving mauls showed the intentions by the Hales forwards, particularly back row Owen Jones, Jay Martin and Nigel Burrows. Second rows Tom King and Guy Field did their bit with Field constantly putting Hales on the front foot.

The front row of Louis Padian, Callum Young and Rich Taylor started to dominate early. After seven minutes of constant

### Rugby

pressure the Hales pack forced a Scrum five yards out from the Bromsgrove line through Greg Smith. Chris Hooper converted.

It was Hooper who put flying winger Luke Smith in for his first try.

On 33 minutes from a lineout the Hales pack drove over for a try from second row Field, Hooper converted.

Following an accidental collision, Hales' No. 8 Owen Jones was forced to leave the field with a suspected broken jaw. He was

replaced by Andy Fitzgerald. With only injury time left in the first half Hales switched off for a few minutes giving Bromsgrove the opportunity to score.

On 65 minutes, whilst the home side were pressurising a solid Hales defence Carl Robins made one of his searing runs and fed winger Smith who took the ball over for his second try of the game. The remaining 15 minutes saw Hales reduced to 13 players following yellow cards for Martin and Young.

Despite this Bromsgrove could not breach the resolute Hales defence, the 7-24 score

stood at the final whistle. After the match team manager Simon Hussey said, "This was a very good performance in difficult conditions and a well-deserved result. Our thoughts go to Owen Jones who looks like he will be operated on for a fractured jaw, we wish him well."

Old Hales return to league action this Saturday at home again against Bromsgrove, kick off 2.15pm.

The Seconds did not play. The Thirds won 12-10 against Old Salts with tries from Glover and George Eccles.

The Fourths and Colts didn't play either.

# Old Hales Firs take second loss in a row

### South Nottingham 2 OHHC 1sts 1

### OLD Halesoniens Hockey Club Men's 1st XI fell to their second straight defeat, as they played away versus South Nottingham.

Hales took control of the game early on and defended impeccably from the frontline. Striker Graham Knight came close to breaking the deadlock early on when his deft touch, drifted under the keeper and just wide of the post.

Hales did however open the scoring, when Paul Woodall found the net from a penalty corner. South Nottingham reacted well and soon equalised before the half time break.

The second half saw Hales continue their excellent defensive work, but up front they were unable to find another breakthrough.

Chances came for the visitors, but they were unable to convert to get a second goal. South Nottingham had their chances, but some excellent saves from Man of the Match Steve Charlton kept the scores level.

The second Hales goal came when a scramble in the circle led to the ball falling to centre half Reise Thompson who slotted home. North Staffs offered little in reply and Old Hales saw out the game fairly comfortably.

Results: Droitwich 3 OHHC Ladies 1sts 1, goalscorer Rae Andrews; OHHC 2nds 3 Barford Tigers 4 goalscorers, Sam Kirby, Ash Greaves, Dion Patel; OHHC 4ths 3 Edgbaston 1 goalscorers, Steve Butler (2), Mark O'Connell; Edgbaston 3 OHHC 5ths 4, goalscorers, Fady Jadayel (2), Tom McGrath, Neil Hurst.

### North Stafford 0 OHHC 3rds 2

Old Hales went into the game looking to get over last week's last minute defeat to Shrewsbury and travelled to face a North Stafford side who had won their last three games, and with Old Hales not taking a single point on their travels this season.

North Staffs had the ma-

jority of the possession in the first half but struggled to create chances. Old Hales took the lead through Alex Evans. His first effort was saved by the goalkeeper but he made no mistake with the rebound.

Old Hales defended exceptionally in the second half. North Staffs had a few chances from penalty corners but when they got through the defence, goalkeeper Ryan Middleton was not to be beaten.

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Old Halesowen's man of the match goalkeeper Steven Charlton whose side was beaten by one goal

## A late strike knocks Tipton

### Brocton 2 Tipton 1

A last-gasp Calum Rudd goal saw Brocton edge an entertaining Midland Premier clash.

It all began disastrously for the visitors with Shaun Griffiths's landing a seventh-minute booking on the edge of the penalty area.

With unerring accuracy, David Berks lashed home the fiercest of free-kicks.

As the half wore on Tipton came more into the picture. After sterling work by Sean Pugh near the corner flag, the ball was despatched to young Mark Garderton in the 23rd minute who crossed for Dave Bate to tie up the score.

Paul Henley remained unfazed in the air for Tipton as their hosts worked ever harder to wrest control again. In the 41st minute, Kalum Evitts, crossed invitingly for Pugh to power a tremendous header barely off-target.

Brocton began the second half well before Tipton showed they were far from finished, Evitts setting up Steve Weaver, whose fine header shaved the top of the crossbar.

Tipton's hopes of prising a point were dashed well into added time when home substitute Rudd forced the ball home.

## Seb should be fit for Chelsea

ALBION hope defender Sébastien Pocognoli will be fit to face Chelsea next week despite the Belgium international suffering a minor hamstring tear.

The Baggies believe the 27-year-old will recover in time for the trip to Stamford Bridge on November 22 after withdrawing from international duty.

Pocognoli was at the club's training ground for treatment this week after being forced off at half-time in Sunday's 2-0 defeat to Newcastle.

Boss Alan Irvine said: "He's got a very slight tear in his hamstring. There's a little tear there but nothing that we're concerned about and nothing that should keep him out."

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# SPORT

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## Villa is handed £20,000 penalty

VILLA have been fined £20,000 by the Football Association for failing to control their players during their recent Premier League game against Tottenham.

Spurs have been fined the same amount after an FA statement said the clubs, who had admitted breaching FA rules, "failed to ensure their players conducted themselves in an orderly fashion".

A scuffle involving numerous players broke out during the game at Villa Park on November 2 after Villa striker Christian Benteke received a red card.

Benteke received a three-match ban for pushing Tottenham's Ryan Mason in the face – a punishment manager Paul Lambert labelled "excessive".

Lambert said at the time: "You cannot condone what he did, but it is not like he threw a Mike Tyson punch."

"My daughter can punch harder."

Villa were leading 1-0 with 24 minutes left, but Spurs hit back against the 10 men to win 2-1.

Meanwhile Villa defender Philippe Senderos has returned to Villa for treatment after suffering a calf injury training with Switzerland.

He misses matches with Lithuania and Poland.

## Tivs hunting for strikers

TIVIDALE have targeted a twin striker boost to replace the departed forwards.

Boss Ian Long has served seven-day approaches for Gornal Athletic's Ryan Francis and Roland Agbor of Boldmere St Michaels after Jazz Luckie joined Stafford Rangers and Lewis Taylor-Boyce returned to Walsall Wood.

"I've been trying to get a couple of strikers in because that's where we're struggling," said Long.

"The approaches expire on Thursday and we're looking to bring in two attacking players because we've lost a bit of pace with those two going."

"We've been decent in the last few games and we want to get some more football under our belts."

Long wants a cup run, adding: "We've got a decent-sized squad so we want to stay in the cups."

## Forward push

Determination from front row gets win

**Page 35**

## Double defeat

Squad suffer their second loss in a row

**Page 35**



email: [Chronsport@expressandstar.co.uk](mailto:Chronsport@expressandstar.co.uk)

## Whiley adds Masters to clean sweep of titles

JORDANNE WHILEY and her Japanese partner Yui Kamiji added one more major wheelchair tennis title to their sweep of all four Grand Slam crowns this season when they retained their women's title at the Wheelchair Doubles Masters in Mission Viejo, California.

Gordon Reid and Michael Jeremiasz of France were runners-up in the men's doubles as British players on the Tennis Foundation's Wheelchair Tennis Performance Programme finished the prestigious event with one title and three runners-up positions between them after Jamie Burdenkin

### Tennis

and Andy Lapthorne were also runners-up in the quad doubles. Whiley, from Hale-sown, became the first British wheelchair tennis player in history to complete a calendar year Grand Slam in September this year when she and Kamiji added the US Open women's doubles title to their Australian Open, Roland Garros and Wimbledon titles.

The British No.1 and Kamiji are now the first non-Dutch pairing to win all four Grand Slams and the Doubles Masters title

in the same season. Whiley and Kamiji were in fine form against Louise Hunt and Germany's Katharina Kruger, earning a 6-2, 6-1 victory.

Whiley was the only player not to drop her serve in the first set and she went on to serve out the match in the second, with Kamiji hitting a winner on match point.

"After winning all four Grand Slams this year this was a big one for us, but we wanted to make sure we ended on a high and we want to replicate it next year," said Whiley. "We are absolutely thrilled and we will play together again at the Grand Slams

in 2015. We are still learning and improving, but for now we are both looking forward to playing at the Wheelchair Tennis Masters in a couple of weeks, where we can hopefully translate our doubles success into singles success."

After nine Brits qualified for the 2014 Doubles Masters, the event ended with Lucy Shuker and Germany's Sabine Ellerbrock finishing fourth in the women's doubles, while Antony Cotterill and the USA's Greg Hasterok were third in the quad doubles. Go to [www.wheelchairtennismasters.com](http://www.wheelchairtennismasters.com).

## YELTZ STUMBLE AT FIRST CUP HURDLE

Newcastle 3 Halesowen 0

### A young Newcastle side progressed to the second round of the Doodson Sports Cup.

The sides three goals in the first half sent Halesowen crashing out at the first hurdle. Halesowen made several changes to the side with Oli Long and John Hill starting.

There was also Robert Thompson-Brown, Chris Lait and Sam Pearson regaining a starting 11 place.

Newcastle were gifted the lead on eight minutes as a calamitous mistake from Curtis Tilt and Sam Pearson allowed youngster Josh Gordon to slot the ball into an empty net from a couple of yards out.

Halesowen tried to regain control of the game, but this came to an abrupt end by the end of the first half, as two quick goals in the final three minutes of the half put the game out of reach.

### Lifted

Castle doubled their lead on 43 minutes, as Josh Gordon latched on to a through ball and he lifted the ball past Pearson and watched it fly into the roof of the net.

Newcastle put the game out of reach on 45 minutes, as Tom Urwin hit a shot from an incredibly awkward angle but the ball curved back towards goal and Pearson couldn't deal with it.

Halesowen's best chances came in the second half, as Joel Kettle's header flew just over the bar, and Neil Mackenzie blasted the bar over as well.

But the Yeltz never got back into the game.

### Football

Halesowen 2 Ramsbottom Utd 0

Improving Halesowen continued to climb up the league table after extending their unbeaten home run to nine games against high-flying Ramsbottom.

Iyeden Christie soon pounced to give the Yeltz a 13th minute lead.

The goal came after intercepting a poor back-pass from Jon Robinson and his clinical finish left goalkeeper Grant Shenton well beaten.

Shenton then made a fine low save from Ben Haseley with the Yeltz looking strong and adapting well to the wet conditions which allowed them to keep a grip on the game.

There was scant evidence of Ramsbottom being the top goalscorers in the league although Jordan Hulme created Ramsbottom's best chance with a 20-yard shot after 40 minutes, only for home goalkeeper Matt Sergeant to produce a flying save and keep the opponents off the scoreboard.

Elliott Turner doubled the home lead three minutes before the interval from close range.

## Awards recognise Black Country sporting heroes



Guest speaker Howard Webb, front, fifth from left, poses alongside recipients of awards from throughout the evening, including Sam Busher and 'Blind' Dave Heeley

SOME of the region's most dedicated and driven athletes and volunteers have been recognised for their sporting efforts at an inspirational ceremony.

Wolverhampton's Olympic medallist, gymnast Kristian Thomas, took the overall Sportsperson of the Year title at the sixth annual Black Country Sport and Physical Activity awards, with 14 winners picking up awards.

The winners, announced at The Light House Media Centre in Wolverhampton, were picked from a shortlist of 30 athletes, coaches and sports clubs drawn from over 100 nominations.

Andy Webb, BeActive Black Country partnership director, said: "We all know the Black Country has a proud sporting heritage, with many world and Olympic medallists coming from the area."

"Many of these people, such as Denise Lewis or even Kristian Thomas, started out in clubs around here that have been recognised all over the world as great sporting institutions."

"We will never forget our heritage but now we are seeing the start of a new era we can all be tremendously proud of. We are now not just producing world-class athletes but world-leading athletes."

The Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Ketley, Telford. Thursday, November 13

Nantwich Town 2 Stourbridge 3

STOURBRIDGE earned their place in the second round of the Doodson Sports Cup thanks to a brace of goals from George Bowerman at the Weaver Stadium in a win over Nantwich.

It took the Glassboys just two minutes to take the lead thanks to a miss-kick by goalkeeper David Stevenson which flew straight to Bowerman who fired home for his first.

With just nine minutes gone Gary Hackett's side were two ahead when Bowerman found Kristian Ramse-Dixon who scored in the bottom corner.

The Dabbers pushed forward at the end of the first half and Aaron Burns was twice denied by clearances off the line.

However, after 49 minutes the hosts did pull one back when Mark Winslade picked the ball and rifled it into the top corner.

Less than a minute later the Dabbers when a long ball over the top was headed over his own goalkeeper by William Richards.

Stourbridge scored the winner after 81 minutes through Bowerman.

## Wembley pitch won't be perfect

WEMBLEY managing director Roger Maslin says the national stadium's pitch will "not be of the very highest standard" when England host Slovenia on Saturday.

Maslin said: "While the pitch will not be of the very highest standard we want, it will still be a good playing surface."

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